



# UBC Opera

## 2022/2023 Season





## Dear UBC Opera patrons,

Welcome to the UBC Opera Ensemble's 2022–23 season! This year we are excited to offer a program of events featuring international stars performing with the ensemble and productions featuring our own talented young singers.

Our Season will begin with our popular **Opera Tea Series** on October 2 at the Botanical Garden where we will introduce you to our new students as well as your favorite performers of previous years. The Opera Tea on October 23 will feature a preview of our upcoming productions.

This year our performance schedule is slightly different so as to avoid clashing with other performing organizations. We ask for your understanding in navigating these changes.

In November at the Old Auditorium the newly formed Opera West Society presents a concert staging of Puccini's *Tosca*. The Opera West Society brings together acclaimed international opera stars in open collaboration and performance with developing Canadian operatic talent to Western Canadian Audiences. One of the Metropolitan Opera's most beloved sopranos, **Sondra Radvanovsky**, will perform the title role, joined by conductor **Jacques Lacombe**, and baritone **Gregory Dahl** as Scarpia in this performance. The tenor role, Cavaradossi, will be sung by **Yonghoon Lee**. The UBC Opera Ensemble will provide all of the comprimario roles and the chorus. UBC Opera Ensemble is delighted to collaborate with Opera West in this thrilling venture.

From December 8–11, 2022 at the Old Auditorium, we will present a holiday favourite, *Hansel and Gretel*, by Engelbert Humperdinck. We will be joined by the Vancouver Opera Orchestra once again, under the baton of **Jacques Lacombe**. Appealing to audiences of all ages this timeless classic will bring the holiday spirit to one and all.

Our second opera production of the season will be the hilariously charming *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze* (*The Florentine Straw Hat*) by Nino Rota (a celebrated composer of film music, including

*The Godfather* and many films directed by Fellini) presented from February 2–5, 2023 at the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts. The **UBC Symphony Orchestra** will join the Opera Ensemble for this production under the baton of their conductor, **Jonathan Girard**. Performed against the backdrop of René Clair’s beautiful silent film, *An Italian Straw Hat*, the antics of these quick-witted characters are as irresistibly funny as the music is playful.

Our final production will feature an opera based on Shakespeare’s wonderful tale of two wives who outwit Sir John Falstaff as well as their own jealous husbands. *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor* by Otto Nicolai will delight our audiences and we hope that, in the words of the two leading ladies, “wit and fancy, merry jesting will attract you to our bait.” Please join the infamous Sir John Falstaff, these Merry Wives and the citizens of the town of Windsor. The opera will be performed in the Old Auditorium from March 24–April 1, 2023 with members of the **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**.

A final Opera Tea celebrating the end of the 2022–23 Season will be held on April 16 before the Ensemble begins to prepare for its return (after a three-year absence due to the pandemic) to their summer home in Teplice, Czech Republic. There they will perform *Rusalka* and *Le nozze di Figaro* and experience singing on the European stage.

We hope you will enjoy this exciting season of opera with the UBC Opera Ensemble!!

Sincerely,



**Prof. Nancy Hermiston, O.C.**  
*Chair of UBC Voice and Opera Divisions*



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
School of Music





# TOSCA

OPERA IN THREE ACTS  
SUNG IN ITALIAN WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

**Giacomo Puccini** | *Composer*

**Luigi Illica & Giuseppe Giacosa** | *Librettists*

Presented by the Opera West Society in collaboration with UBC Opera

**November 26, 2022 — 7:30 p.m. | The Old Auditorium**

Perhaps Puccini's greatest masterpiece, *Tosca* premiered on January 18, 1900. Its searingly beautiful and passionate score guaranteed its great success and established Puccini as Verdi's successor of the 20th century. It also testified to Puccini's skill as a man of the theatre, as the gorgeous music of *Tosca* seamlessly blends into the deep reverence he has for the melodrama of the original Sardou play on which the opera is based, *La Tosca*. While the play dropped out of theatrical rotation in the 1920s, Puccini's version of *Tosca* has lived on as one of the most beloved and enduring works in the opera canon.

Filled with romance, devotion, and political intrigue, *Tosca* tells the story of the eponymous Tosca, a fiery and tempestuous yet pious singer, and her lover, painter Mario Cavaradossi. Embroiled in the political tensions gripping Rome during the time of Napoleon's invasion in 1800, and with the indomitable Baron Scarpia set on capturing Cavaradossi and taking Tosca for himself, the stakes for these two lovers could not be higher. A tragic story of love and death, this emotional journey set to Puccini's soaring score will sweep you off into Tosca's passionate realm – and, more than likely, move you to tears.

UBC Opera subscribers will receive priority access to purchase tickets for this performance. Tickets range from \$80–\$150. Please see page 12 for more information.

**Jacques Lacombe** | *Conductor*

**Nancy Hermiston** | *Director*

*With Members of the* **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**

# Opera West Society

Opera West's debut performance, a semi-staged concert version of *Tosca*, will feature a stellar cast led by international opera star **Sondra Radvanovsky** in the eponymous role, favourite Canadian baritone **Gregory Dahl** as the villainous Baron Scarpia, with further casting to be announced. Canadian conductor, **Jacques Lacombe** will lead the distinguished guest artists, the members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra and UBC Opera Ensemble in this performance of Puccini's suspenseful, political drama set in the Napoleonic war era of the 1800s.

Praised for its rich, powerful and inventive orchestration and its charismatic, dramatic and forceful characters, which have fascinated both performers and audiences alike, *Tosca* remains one of the most frequently performed and recorded operas. The Opera West Society hopes that you will be moved by our debut performance and thrilled to experience it in person.

Opera West is an opera society bringing together acclaimed international opera stars in open collaboration and performance for Western Canadian audiences. Opera West seeks to connect emergent and developing Canadian operatic talent with the world's greatest singers in fruitful artistic relationships and performance. Inspired by the greatest voices in opera, Opera West will present both classic and contemporary opera and seek to inspire and foster Western Canadian operatic performers and audiences.







# Opera Teas

October 2, 2022 | 2:00 pm | UBC Botanical Garden  
Welcome and Welcome Back

October 23, 2022 | 2:00 pm | Old Auditorium  
A Sneak Peek at *Hansel and Gretel* and More

April 16, 2023 | 2:00 pm | UBC Botanical Garden  
A Celebration of Spring

Opera Teas bring you closer to the performers onstage, offering a more intimate performance and a chance to mingle during the intermission. Enjoy a concert of opera arias and song favourites in a casual setting, either amid the beautiful greenery of the UBC Botanical Garden or in the historic setting of the Old Auditorium theatre.

In our first Tea of the season, we will feature our new students (as well as welcoming back those you already know and love!) at the UBC Botanical Garden. It's always a treat to meet and listen to these talented young singers who have joined us from all over the world. In October, you will have the chance to join us at the Old Auditorium to experience a preview of our upcoming production of *Hansel and Gretel*, as well as hear arias from students preparing for major competitions and auditions. Finally, in April we will return to the Botanical Garden to celebrate the coming of Spring with some operatic favourites you won't want to miss. Come join us!





# HANSEL AND GRETEL

FAIRY TALE OPERA IN THREE ACTS  
SUNG IN ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

**Engelbert Humperdinck** | *Composer*

**Adelheid Wette** | *Librettist*

December 8, 9, 10, 2022 — 7:30 p.m.

December 11, 2022 — 2:00 p.m. | The Old Auditorium

In 1891, Engelbert Humperdinck's sister Adelheid Wette asked him to write some music to go with a story she had written as a Christmas gift for her children, based on the Grimm brothers' popular fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel." What started as a few musical sketches quickly grew into a full-scale opera, becoming a Christmas gift for generations – one that is still beloved today, by children and adults alike!

Bring your whole family to watch as this familiar fairy tale is brought to life with music inspired by folk songs – with a dash of whimsy that sets the stage for the magical happenings at work. Tap your toes as the young Hansel and Gretel dance merrily in their cottage, and commiserate as their Mother comes home to discover the chores left undone. As the children head into the enchanted forest, prepare to dreamily sigh as they sing the beautiful Evening Prayer, before discovering the greatest magic of all: a house entirely made of gingerbread! But behind this delicious magic lurks the dangerous Witch, intent on turning the children themselves into treats. Will the resourceful Hansel and Gretel find their way out of the Witch's clutches? Of course they will – after all, it's the Holiday Season!

**Jacques Lacombe** | *Conductor*

**Nancy Hermiston** | *Director*

*With Members of the* **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**



# THE FLORENTINE STRAW HAT

(Il cappello di paglia di Firenze)

FARSA MUSICALE IN FOUR ACTS  
SUNG IN ITALIAN WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

**Nino Rota** | *Composer*

**Nino Rota, Ernesta Rota Rinaldi** | *Librettists*

February 2, 3, 4, 2023 — 7:30 p.m. | February 5, 2023 — 2:00 p.m.  
Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

The Florentine Straw Hat is an exhilarating comedy based on the famous nineteenth-century French farce which inspired René Clair's classic silent film *An Italian Straw Hat*. Nino Rota – who was also a celebrated composer of film music, including *The Godfather* and many films directed by Fellini – co-wrote the libretto for *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze* and composed the music in 1945. His witty and brilliant satire on the petty conventions of respectable society is presented in music in the tradition of Rossini, Puccini, and Verdi.

The farcical story concerns a bridegroom's quest to replace a straw hat eaten by his horse. Unfortunately, the hat belonged to a married lady who was dallying with her lover, and she fears discovery if she returns home hatless. An unpromising start to a wedding day!

**Jonathan Girard** | *Conductor*

**Nancy Hermiston** | *Director*

**UBC Symphony Orchestra**





# DIE LUSTIGEN WEIBER VON WINDSOR

(The Merry Wives of Windsor)

SINGSPIEL IN THREE ACTS

SUNG IN GERMAN WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

**Otto Nicolai** | *Composer*

**Salomon Hermann Mosenthal** | *Librettist*

Based on the play by William Shakespeare

March 24, 25, 2023 — 7:30 p.m. | March 26, April 1, 2023 — 2:00 p.m.  
The Old Auditorium

Legend has it that Queen Elizabeth I requested Shakespeare write a play showing the character of Falstaff in love, and the result is a story so perfect for the operatic stage it has been the basis for no fewer than ten operas. Based on Shakespeare's comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor* is Otto Nicolai's last and most famous opera, and is surely one of the most stellar adaptations (alongside the likes of his contemporary Verdi's *Falstaff*). While Otto Nicolai may no longer command the same recognition as the likes of Verdi, his music is no less engaging, filled with delightful melodies, toe-tapping rhythms, and clever harmonies to match the twists and turns of this light-hearted plot.

When down-on-his-luck nobleman Falstaff is discovered to be courting two married women at once, the ladies, Frau Fluth and Frau Reich, take it upon themselves to teach him a lesson. Their husbands, Herr Fluth and Herr Reich, are unwittingly drawn into this plot to ridicule Falstaff. Amidst the chaos, Frau Reich's daughter Anna is fending off the suitors chosen by her parents while pursuing her penniless love, Fenton. Disguises and hijinks abound as these merry wives use all their cunning to corral Falstaff into the most unlikely of situations, greeted by suspicious husbands at every turn! As everyone assembles in Windsor Forest at night for a masked ball, all schemes are revealed, true love is honoured, and all reconcile and laugh in shared merriment.

**Norbert Baxa** | *Conductor*

**Nancy Hermiston** | *Director*

With Members of the **Vancouver Opera Orchestra**



# Ticket Nitty-Gritty

Single tickets go on sale in September. Subscription renewals starting July 18, 2022. Buy tickets online at [www.ubcooperatickets.com](http://www.ubcooperatickets.com), or by phone at **604.822.6725**.

	MAIN OPERAS		OPERA TEA	TOSCA
	Single Ticket	Subscription (3 operas)		
ADULT	\$45	\$105	\$28	\$80 – \$150
SENIOR	\$35	\$78	\$23	
STUDENT	\$15/\$20*	\$42	\$15	
SUBSCRIBER (Adult & Senior)			\$19	
STUDENT SUBSCRIBER			\$13	

\*Please note that UBC Student Tickets are \$15, non-UBC Students Tickets are \$20

## Bring Your Group

Bring your group for a memorable and affordable opera experience. Group rates are available for groups of 10 or more. Discounted school group rates are also available. Please contact UBC Opera at **604.822.6725** for more information.

## Parking at UBC

For performances at the Old Auditorium, parking is available at the Fraser River Parkade, a short two-minute walk from the theatre. The Armories Parking Lot, adjacent to the UBC Music Building, is open to the public after 5 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends. For UBC Opera performances at the Chan Centre, event parking is adjacent to the venue at the Rose Garden Parkade.

For all UBC Opera events, parking is available at these lots for 50% off the posted rate. Pre-paid parking is available for subscribers with pre-registration of a license plate number—please contact the Box Office for details.



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vancouveropera  
2022–2023 SEASON

**The Pearl Fishers** | **A Midsummer Night's Dream** | **The Flying Dutchman**

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