



For Immediate Release
March 23, 2009

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Travel to Seville with Manitoba Opera
2009/10 SEASON FEATURES
TWO “HOT” AUDIENCE FAVOURITES

Can't afford a winter holiday? Then travel to Seville with Manitoba Opera (MO)! The company today announced plans to put a little heat into the 2009/10 season with two of the world's hottest and most popular operas: the comedic gem, *The Barber of Seville* and the seductive *Carmen*. Olé!

“The great thing about opera is that you can travel to any place, any time, and next season, we're going to Seville,” commented Larry Desrochers, Manitoba Opera General Director & CEO. “Both operas are set in this sultry, sandy city in the south of Spain and to take us there, we have assembled some of the best artists in North America being showcased in two of the best operas in the world. The season will be hot, sexy, and funny. What more could you want in a trip?”

The season will open with three performances of Gioachino Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*: **Saturday, November 21, Tuesday, November 24, and Friday, November 27, 2009.**

It's one close shave after another, in this classic opera buffa in which Figaro, the ingenious town barber, aids his friend, Count Almaviva, in his bid for the lovely Rosina. It means outfoxing her lecherous old guardian, Dr. Bartolo however, as he has plans to marry her himself.

Disguise, subterfuge, collusion, and deception rule the day in this celebrated and beloved comedy set in 17th century Spain. With lyrical melodies, the famous overture, show-stopping arias including one of the most popular of all time, “Largo al factotum” (Figaro, Figaro, Figaro) and a handful of delightful ensemble pieces, *The Barber of Seville* is a laugh fest for all.

Winnipeg's own **Nikki Einfeld** will sing the role of Rosina. She appeared as Adele in MO's 2006 production of *Die Fledermaus*. “...tossed off Rossini's coloratura ‘Una voce poco fa’ with an accuracy and musicality that made all the aria's florid runs sound easy.” – *Jake Neals Music Reviews* (Nevada Opera) “Her performance has major career stamped all over it...” *San Francisco Classical Voice*

James Westman, a leading young Canadian baritone will sing the jack-of-all-trades role of Figaro. He last sang with Manitoba Opera as Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in February, 2003. “His baritone was strong and forthright, its vigor and rolling power fully appropriate for the role.” *Santa Fe Pasa Reviews*

American tenor **Victor Ryan Robertson**, known for his versatile singing ability and style will make his Manitoba Opera debut as the lovesick Count Almaviva. “...able to scale the heights and sustain his phrases without it ever sounding too difficult.” *The Stage*, UK

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2. Manitoba Opera 2009/10 Season Announcement

Former Winnipegger, **Peter Strummer**, one of the leading character bass-baritones, returns to sing the role of Dr. Bartolo. "...a convincing Bartolo, with his testiness and just the right amount of boorishness....he was a pleasure to listen to." *Press-Republic*

Last performed by Manitoba Opera in 2001, *The Barber of Seville* will be directed by veteran opera director **David Gately**, in his Manitoba Opera debut and conducted by Manitoba Opera Chorus Master **Tadeusz Biernacki**. It will be sung in Italian with English translations projected above the stage.

Georges Bizet's scintillating drama of passion and jealousy, **Carmen**, will be the second production with shows **Saturday, April 17, Tuesday, April 20, and Friday, April 23, 2010.**

This fiery fatal attraction tells the tale of the sensuous cigarette girl who plays with fire when she spurns her lover for a celebrated matador. Last performed by Manitoba Opera in 2002, Bizet's music pulsates with the spirit of Spain and features one stunning opera favourite after another including the famous "Habanera," the sensuous rhythms of the "Seguidilla," and the rousing Toreador Song.

Considered one of the most riveting and significant emerging young artists performing today, American mezz-soprano, **Kirsten Chavez** will sing the title role. She is quickly becoming one of the definitive Carmens of the day and has performed the role throughout North America as well as in Japan, China, and Australia. "...the Carmen of a lifetime...dark, generous mezzo, earthy eroticism, volcanic spontaneity, and smoldering charisma, Chavez has it all..." *Opernhaus Graz* "Smoldering eroticism in a role she was born to play..." *operaonline.us*

Canadian tenor, **David Pomeroy**, who hails from Newfoundland and has performed throughout North America including at The Met, will sing the role of Don José. He last appeared with Manitoba Opera in the 2005 concert, An Evening in Paris. "Pomeroy's Don José sparked an electricity which totally engrossed the audience with a magnetically rich voice." *Irish Examiner*

The Mexican-born baritone, **Luis Ledesma**, will sing the role of Escamillo. He has appeared in several opera houses world wide, many throughout the US as well, and toured with Andrea Bocelli. This will be his Manitoba Opera debut. "His mahogany-toned voice, excellent Italian and riveting stage presence anchored every scene he was in..." *Kansas City Star*

Quebec soprano, **Frédérique Vézina** will sing the role of Micaëla. Ms.Vézina, who last sang with the company at the Evening in Paris concert in 2005, is a multi-award winner and much in demand throughout North America. "...her lovely voice, with its warm, rich depth, top vibrato and beautiful phrasing makes her one of the country's most gifted young singers." *The Globe and Mail*

The production will be directed by Winnipegger **Rob Herriot**, who directed MO's hit *La Bohème* in 2005. Manitoba Opera's Music Advisor and Principal Conductor **Tyrone Paterson** will conductor. *Carmen* will be sung in French with English translations projected above the stage.

Both productions will be staged at the Centennial Concert Hall.

Current subscribers will be receiving renewal packages in April and will have until June 19 to secure their seats. New subscription orders will also be taken during this time and processed starting in July.

Season brochures/new subscriber order forms will be available in late April. To receive a copy, contact Debbie Melnick at 944-8929 or email dmelnick@manitobaopera.mb.ca

Casual tickets to both shows will go on sale in September and can be purchased online at ticketmaster.ca, in person at Ticketmaster outlets, or by calling 253-ARTS (2787).

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