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## Opera Columbus kicks off 40<sup>th</sup> season with the return of Puccini's *Tosca* Costuming by renowned UK-based designer Neil Fortin

(Columbus, OH) – War, chaos and corruption set the tone for the Giacomo Puccini's iconic opera as Opera Columbus kicks off its 40<sup>th</sup> season with *Tosca*, the very first opera it presented upon the company's premiere in 1981.

Set in Rome in 1800, the story pits the main character, Rome's diva Floria Tosca, and her lover Mario Cavaradossi against a corrupt police chief, Baron Scarpia. Sensational OPERA America Women Conductor Grantee **Tiffany Chang**, returning Opera Columbus favorite director **Eve Summer** and costume designer **Neil Fortin** recreate a lavish, original production, inspired by the look of *Bridgerton*, and full of intrigue, suspense, and musical melodrama.

For two performances only, Opera Columbus presents *Tosca* on Saturday, Dec 18 at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, Dec 19 at 2:00 p.m. at the Southern Theatre.

**Michelle Johnson** makes her role debut as Floria Tosca -- a role coveted for its vast dramatic arc and show-stopping aria, 'Vissi d'arte' -- after a moving *Aida* in Columbus in 2018. New York Metropolitan Opera favorite **Adam Diegel** makes his Opera Columbus debut as passionate Cavaradossi. **Brian Major**, renowned for his villain characters, inhabits the role Scarpia. Additional cast includes local favorite Michael Kirkman as Spoletta, Hidenori Inoue as Angelotti, and Robert Kerr as the Sacristan/Jailer. The *Tosca* production will use an original set constructed by Opera Omaha and Boston Lyric Opera.

Puccini's *Tosca*, with Italian libretto (text) by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, premiered in Rome in January of 1900. The work was based on Victorien Sardou's 1887 French-language dramatic play, *La Tosca*. *Tosca* premiered at a time of unrest in Rome, and its first performance was delayed for a day for fear of disturbances. Despite initially indifferent reviews from the critics, the opera was an immediate success with the public.

"We couldn't think of a better way to kick off our 40<sup>th</sup> season than revisiting one of the premiere operas of all time, *Tosca*" said Julia Noulin-Mérat, General Director & CEO of Opera Columbus. "We've added some fun updates, including Neil Fortin's incredible costume design and we are excited to welcome the sensational conductor Tiffany Chang to Columbus. This *Tosca* will be dramatically different from our 1981 presentation, including an immersive soundscape that will transport you to Rome with its unique church bells."

*Tosca* will be sung in Italian with English surtitles. The production is not recommended for patrons under the age of 13.

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**COVID SAFETY GUIDELINES:** We adhere to state and federal COVID-19 safety recommendations. Attendees of all Opera Columbus events are required to be fully masked regardless of vaccination status. Additionally, attendees of all Opera Columbus events are required to present a valid ID and proof of COVID-19 vaccination (in the form of an immunization card or photo proof of one) or negative PCR test results obtained no more than 72 hours before the event. In order to streamline entry, CAPA encourages you to use the [Bindle App](#), a free, secure, easy to use digital pass for entrance to their venues.

**TICKETS:** Tickets range from \$27.50 to \$107.50 and can be purchased through our website at [operacolumbus.org](http://operacolumbus.org). Subscription series tickets are also available.

**CAST & CREATIVE:** Michelle Johnson, Floria Tosca; Adam Diegel, Mario Cavaradossi; Brian Major, Baron Scarpia; Michael Kirkman, Spoletta; Hidenori Inoue, Cesare Angelotti; Miguel Pedroza, Sciarrone; Robert Kerr, Sacristan/Jailer; Aryssa Leigh Burrs, Shepherdess. Tiffany Chang, conductor; Eve Summer, director; Julia Noulin-Mérat, set designer; Neil Fortin, costume designer; Pablo Santiago, lighting designer; Hester Warren-Steijn, stage manager.

### **About Opera Columbus**

Under the vision of General Director + CEO Julia Noulin-Mérat, Opera Columbus is redefining and reimagining the concept of regional opera with world-class productions that celebrate extraordinary talent and artistic partnerships, engaging a new, diverse audience for this most magnificent of art forms. From groundbreaking collaborations to innovative and breathtaking productions, Opera Columbus is passionate about creating artistic moments for each and every patron. Opera Columbus's slogan, "Make It Yours," demonstrates the company's commitment to inclusivity, and invites everyone in the community to join with us.

For more information, visit [www.OperaColumbus.org](http://www.OperaColumbus.org),  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/OperaColumbus](http://www.facebook.com/OperaColumbus), Instagram: @Opera.Columbus or  
Twitter: @OperaColumbus

Join the conversation by using #ToscaOC #MakeItYours #OperaCbus #OCturns40

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