

## Missing Artistic & Production Technical Information Package For touring or rental productions

Libretto by Marie Clements | Music by Brian Current



World Première Production, November 2017

Co-commissioned and co-produced by Pacific Opera Victoria and City Opera Vancouver

In English and Gitksan

A new chamber opera by Métis playwright **Marie Clements** and Juno-winning composer **Brian Current**, *Missing* gives voice, in English and Gitksan, to the story of Canada's missing and murdered Indigenous women. Set in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and along the Highway of Tears, *Missing* is a poetic expression of loss and hope, its creation led by aboriginal theatre and opera artists. Pacific Opera Victoria and City Opera Vancouver collaborated on the co-commission and co-production of this important new opera.

### World Première Performances

York Theatre, Vancouver, November 3 to 11, 2017

Baumann Centre, Victoria, November 17 to 26, 2017

**Private previews** for families (invited audience)

November 1, 7 pm. Russian Hall, Vancouver

November 16, 7 pm. Baumann Centre, Victoria

## Missing

Music by Brian Current | Libretto by Marie Clements

Sung in English and Gitksan, with English surtitles

Approximate running time: 1 hour, 20 minutes, with no intermission

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Conductor                      | Timothy Long    |
| Director                       | Peter Hinton    |
| Scenic and Projection Designer | Andy Moro       |
| Costume Designer               | Carmen Thompson |
| Lighting Designer              | John Webber     |
| Sound Designer                 | Sandy Scofield  |
| Dramaturg                      | Paula Danckert  |

CAST in order of vocal appearance

|                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Ava                        | Caitlin Wood       |
| Native Girl                | Melody Courage     |
| Jess                       | Heather Molloy     |
| Devon                      | Kaden Forsberg     |
| Dr. Wilson                 | Marion Newman      |
| Native Student/Angus Wilds | Clarence Logan     |
| Native Mother              | Rose-Ellen Nichols |

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Gitksan Translations and Diction Coach: | Vincent Gogag        |
| Gitksan IPA Transcriptions:             | Michael David Schwan |

ORCHESTRA (VICTORIA, BC)

Violin: Simon MacDonald

Cello: Alasdair Money

Flute: Mary Byrne

Clarinet: Rebecca Hissen

Percussion: Aaron Mattock

Percussion: Ana Gasco-Gomez

Piano: Tatiana Vassilieva

World première production

A co-commission and co-production by City Opera Vancouver and Pacific Opera Victoria

## DEVELOPMENT

***Missing* is a new opera created by BC's foremost indigenous playwright and filmmaker, Marie Clements, with music by Juno award winning composer Brian Current.**

The creation and première of *Missing* was led by aboriginal theatre and opera artists. The creative process integrated extensive consultation with First Nations and residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside community via workshops that invited friends and family of missing women, advocates, artists, and academic consultants to share their responses to the work in progress.

The performances were accompanied by community engagement initiatives intended to honour the power of art and the spirit of conciliation. Kwagiulth and Coast Salish artist Carey Newman, a member of Pacific Opera Victoria's Board, and Community Engagement Coordinator Ron Rice, Executive Director of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, worked with a team of First Nations cultural advisors to provide guidance and counsel to further explore the opera's social, historic, and cultural context and the intersection of classical and aboriginal music traditions.

**Librettist Marie Clements**, one of BC's most distinguished playwrights and filmmakers, has explained why it is so important to tell this story: *The spirit of the murdered and missing women will not disappear. They will stay around until we see them and hear them.* Ms. Clements' libretto takes this overwhelming tragedy and pares it down to one woman and the ripples her life and death have left for a mother, a brother, a stranger.

**Composer Brian Current** set to music words that are in both English and Gitksan: *As cultural boundaries have surely played a role in our national silence about these missing women, one of our goals is to use both native and non-native language alongside music to build a bridge between the cultures.*

*... Its dramatic and visual power—helped by a stunning set that includes a giant, skeletal rib cage on the floor and haunting projections on the scrim covering the bones of a longhouse, by Euro/Omushkego Cree artist Andy Moro—and the simple force of the tragedy the Indigenous community continues to face make this production a must-see, for all Canadians.*

Robin Miller, *Opera Canada*

*The power of Missing's libretto is magnified by the equally spare music of Toronto-based JUNO Award-winning composer Brian Current, whose sublime score – conducted here by Timothy Long – soars and plummets in unison with the fierce complexity of emotions that are brought to bear through the telling of this tragic tale...*

*Missing is an extraordinarily moving and thought-provoking work, and a milestone for the opera world. It has taken a painful and horrifying topic and rendered it into accessible art. Ultimately, its message is a universal one: open our eyes and hearts to each other's pain. By doing so, humanity has a chance for healing and redemption. Missing begins this healing journey in a magnificent mélange of singing, acting and music that, one hopes, will be seen by audiences across Canada and the world.*

Roberta Staley, *The Whole Note*

## SYNOPSIS

Ava, a young white woman, is thrown from her car and badly injured in a crash on Highway 16. She sees another body – a young native girl – lying on the ground. Their eyes meet.

Some time after the accident, Ava returns to class at law school with her friend Jess and ex-boyfriend Devon. A guest lecturer, Dr. Wilson, addresses the class about the Missing and Murdered Women in Canada. Jess argues with Dr. Wilson and feels betrayed when Ava won't support her. The friendship is shattered.

We see a moment between the Native Mother and her adult son, at their cabin; a flashback shows him as a teenager playing with his much younger sister.

In downtown Vancouver, Ava sees images of the Native Girl in the store windows. She unexpectedly meets Devon and their love for each other is renewed. Ava starts to learn the Gitksan language from Dr. Wilson.

In Ava and Devon's home, Ava contemplates her new pregnancy and suddenly sees the Native Girl in the mirror. Ava is spooked, but when the Native Girl disappears, Ava calls her: 'Don't go, I'm sorry.' They speak.

Ava and Devon celebrate marriage with a traditional Gitksan ceremony.

At the cabin, the Native Mother mourns her lost daughter.

Ava is distressed by her baby's constant crying. Dr. Wilson and Ava talk about the baby's passage from one world to another. The Native Girl is attacked in the woods beside Highway 16 and Ava experiences this as a nightmare. She awakens, terrified, and Devon comforts her.

Devon goes back to sleep. Ava walks the baby up and down. The Native Girl appears, and Ava allows her to hold her baby daughter. Ava and the Native Girl sing to the baby, echoing the Native Mother's song to her lost girl. Their worlds connect.

The Native Mother calls her daughter home.

Ava and the Native Girl have found each other: each sees the other in herself and herself in the other. The Native Girl's spirit can fly away. At the cabin, the Native Mother and her son mourn the death of their daughter and sister.

## ARTISTS

### **MARIE CLEMENTS, Librettist**

Marie is an award-winning writer, director, and producer of film, TV, radio, new media, and live performance. Her many awards include Best Public Service Film (2015 American Indian Film Festival) and the WIDC Feature Film Award. Her short works include *Pilgrims* (Shaw Media Award) and *The Language of Love* (Honorable Mention, 2012 Imaginative Film Festival). Her music video *The Road Forward* screened at some 13 film festivals, winning Best Music Video (American Indian Film Festival and Southeastern Film Festival). Her multi-media musical *The Road Forward* sold out at the 2015 Push International Performance Festival. She is President of her new media company MCM; Artistic Director of red diva projects; and an alumna of Women In the Director's Chair (WIDC) in Banff.

### **BRIAN CURRENT, Composer**

Brian studied music at McGill University and UC Berkeley. His music, lauded and broadcast in over 35 countries, has been awarded a Juno Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Barlow Prize for Orchestral Music (USA), the Italian Premio Fedora for Chamber Opera, and a Selected Work (under 30) at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris. His pieces have been programmed by all major symphony orchestras in Canada and by professional orchestras, ensembles, and opera companies worldwide. In demand as a guest conductor, he regularly leads orchestral programs of contemporary music.

### **TIMOTHY LONG, Conductor**

A pianist, conductor, and educator, Timothy has conducted for Boston Lyric Opera, the Juilliard School, New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and others; he is founding conductor and arranger for The Coast Orchestra, an all-Native American orchestra of classically trained musicians. As harpsichordist with the Sejong Soloists he has performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and throughout Europe. He is the pianist on a 2017 Naxos recording with baritone Brian Mulligan. He is an associate professor at SUNY-Stony Brook, an artist faculty member of the Aspen Music Festival and School, and music director and co-founder of Voices of Hope, an annual charity concert for the Mennonite Central Committee. He is from the Choctaw and Muscogee Creek tribes and lives in Brooklyn.

### **PETER HINTON, OC, Stage Director**

One of Canada's most respected directors and teachers, Peter has directed for the Shaw Festival (*An Octoroon*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Pygmalion*, *Cabaret*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *When the Rain Stops Falling*). As the National Arts Centre Artistic Director of English Theatre, he directed the world premières of Marie Clements' *Burning Vision* and *Copper Thunderbird*. He has been associate artist at the Stratford Festival; has taught at the National Theatre School and Ryerson University; and is the professional mentor for the York University/Canadian Stage MFA directing program. Recent credits include *Constellations* (Canadian Stage/Centaur Theatre), *Bombay Black* (Factory Theatre), *All's Well that Ends Well* (The Shakespeare Company), *Millennial Malcontent* (Tarragon Theatre), *The Rez Sisters* (Belfry Theatre), *Funny Girl* and *The Seagull* (Segal Centre), and *Louis Riel* (Canadian Opera Company).

**ANDY MORO, Scenic and Projection Designer**

A Euro/Omushkego Cree artist, Andy co-creates with companies across Turtle Island, including works with Kaha:wi Dance Theatre, Red Sky Performance, and the Gitksan Dancers of Damelahamid. He co-founded co-founder Red Pepper Spectacle Arts and the Production Mentorship Program at the Centre for Indigenous Theatre and is on faculty at the Banff Centre's Indigenous Dance Residency. He is founder and director, with Tara Beagan, of ARTICLE 11, a creation and production company that celebrates Article 11 of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with projects featured at the National Arts Centre, Royal Ontario Museum, Planet IndigenUs, and Performing Turtle Island; ARTICLE 11 recently premiered *Reckoning*, a triptych tackling fallout from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

**CARMEN THOMPSON, Costume Designer**

A costume designer for over 15 years, Carmen (Diitiidaht/Kyuquot/Coast Salish) was inspired by her father, the late Art Thompson, a renowned carver and painter, to combine her cultural background and technical training in her work. She formed her own graphic and web design company and studied at L.A.'s Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandise, working on more than 20 feature films, including the international TV series *1491: The Untold Story of the Americas Before Columbus*. Her multi-media cultural projects include a copper wall installation based on her father's design at Vancity Credit Union in Victoria. Her Nuu-chah-nulth name 'Tlaa'kwaa' means copper – appropriate for an artist whose works are luminous, brilliant, and culturally centred.

**JOHN WEBBER, Lighting Designer**

John has been designing sets and lighting since the early 1990s and has worked with some of Western Canada's most adventurous artists, receiving nine Jessie Richardson Awards, an Ovation Award, a Capital Critics Circle Award, and a Prix Rideau, all for outstanding design. Recent credits include lighting for *Onegin* at the Arts Club Goldcorp venue (Jessie Award), co-set and lighting design for *Pauline* (City Opera Vancouver), and lighting for *Rigoletto* (Vancouver Opera). Other favorite productions include *Copper Thunderbird* (National Arts Centre), *Palace Grand* and *No Exit* (Electric Company), *St. Joan* (Arts Club), and *Calamity Town* (Vertigo Theatre, Calgary).

**SANDY SCOFIELD, Sound Designer**

Sandy studied music at Vancouver Community College and completed her BFA at Simon Fraser University, studying composition with Owen Underhill and electroacoustic music with Barry Truax. The award winning Métis composer, musician, and singer has studied classical, jazz, African, and Indonesian gamelan; received three Juno nominations; mentored First Nations singers and songwriters; toured to festivals on five continents; and composed for dance, film, tv, and theatre, including the Aboriginal Welcoming Song for the 2010 Olympics. Sandy combines learning from her touring and composition studies and from the musicians she mentors, and applies it to her sense of melody, harmony and rhythm, resulting in what writer Phil Paine calls *a high-level synthesis of jazz, blues, rock and pop* with First Nations traditions.

**MELODY COURAGE, Coloratura Soprano.** Native Girl

With a degree and diploma in Opera Performance from the Vancouver Academy of Music, Melody has performed with Vancouver Opera since 2003, playing First Lady (*The Magic Flute*), Barbarina, (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and the Queen of the Night (*The Magic Flute*, VOIS school tour). She was a soloist in Vivaldi's *Gloria* (National Arts Centre Orchestra) and *Messiah* (Prince George Symphony Orchestra). The Métis soprano has performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's *Planet IndigenUS Festival*, in Bill Reid's *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii* (Vancouver's Inaugural Cultural Olympiad), and with electric cellist, Cris Derksen (*Ode'min Giizis Festival*). She has worked with Nico Castel, Judith Forst, Tracy Dahl, and Metropolitan Opera coach Carol Isaac.

**CAITLIN WOOD, Soprano.** Ava

Caitlin made her POV debut in the title role of the 2015 school tour production of *Mary's Wedding*. Recent roles include Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Vancouver Opera Festival), Giulietta in *I Capuletti e Montecchi* (Opera in Concert), and Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* (Edmonton Opera). She toured Ontario with Bicycle Opera Project in *Sweat*. In December, she shares the stage with Russell Braun in Finzi's *In Terra Pax* (Ottawa Choral Society). In 2018, Caitlin performs in the world premiere of Morris Panych and James Rolfe's *The Overcoat*, a co-production of Tapestry Opera, Canadian Stage and Vancouver Opera.

**MARION NEWMAN, Mezzo-soprano.** Dr. Wilson

Marion's POV roles include Margret (*Wozzeck*), Juno (*The Tempest*), and Tisbe (Rossini's *Cinderella*). The Kwagiulth and Stó:lō First Nations, English, Irish and Scottish mezzo-soprano has also sung Carmen and Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and performed across Canada in repertoire ranging from Vivaldi to Vivier, with a focus on works that speak to her First Nations identity. 2017/18 highlights include the premiere of Jennifer Butler's *Klee Wyck Woman* (Emily Carr String Quartet), the title role in *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* (Voicebox:Opera in Concert), and Tovey's *Ancestral Voices* with the Vancouver Symphony on tour in BC, Manitoba and Ontario.

**ROSE-ELLEN NICHOLS, Mezzo-soprano.** Native Mother

Since receiving her Master's in opera from UBC, Rose-Ellen has performed all over Canada and Europe. Her roles include Third Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*), Marcellina (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*), Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Polinesso (*Ariodante*), Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*), Filipievna and Olga (*Eugene Onegin*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Mrs. Todd (*The Old Maid and the Thief*), and Soprano 3 (*The Lost Operas of Mozart*). The Coast Salish mezzo soprano created the roles of Antonia Wolf (Lloyd Burritt's *The Dream Healer*); Fadila (Arthur Bachmann's *What Brought Us Here*); Rebecca / Red Cedar (Veda Hille's *Jack Pine*), and the title role in *Pauline* (Margaret Atwood and Tobin Stokes).

**HEATHER MOLLOY, Mezzo-soprano.** Jess

Prairie born and raised, Heather earned her Master's Degree at UBC. A graduate of the Calgary Opera Emerging Artist Program, she made her orchestral debut singing with the Regina Symphony Orchestra and has been a featured soloist with the Vancouver, Saskatoon and Calgary Festival Symphonies. She appears frequently with Vancouver Opera, most recently as Mrs. Charleston in *Dead Man Walking*. Other roles include Elizabeth Proctor (*The Crucible*), Prince Charming (*Cendrillon*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Christian Keith (*The Inventor*), and Alyssa (*Stickboy*).

**KADEN FORSBERG, Tenor.** Devon

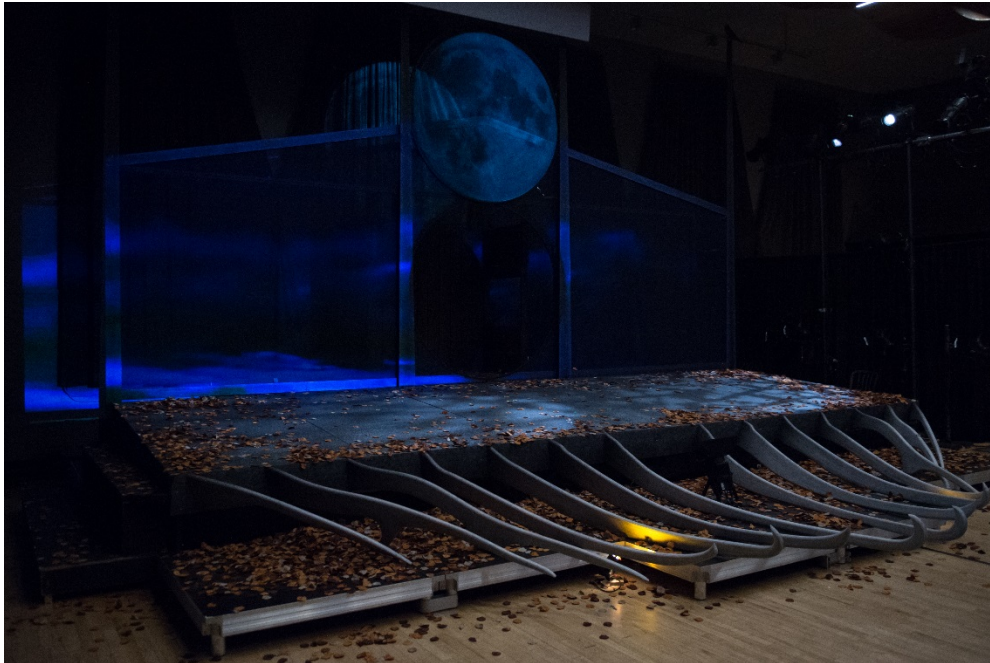
Kaden made his POV solo debut as Charlie in *Mary's Wedding* for schools, returning as Snout (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and First Priest / Armed Guard (*The Magic Flute*). Other roles include Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* (Amalfi Coast Music Festival), Medoro in *Orlando Paladino* (the Mozarteum), and the title roles of *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Candide*. A former student of Benjamin Butterfield, Kaden has performed in concert in Alberta and with the Victoria Baroque Players and Civic Orchestra. Upcoming are the roles of the Evangelist in Bach's Christmas Oratorio (Okanagan Festival Singers) and Wilhelm Grimm in *The Brothers Grimm* (Opera NUOVA).

**CLARENCE LOGAN, Bass Baritone.** Angus Wilds

Clarence is of half First Nations descent, his mother being from Moosomin First Nations in Saskatchewan. He holds a MMus in Literature and Performance (University of Western Ontario) and has studied voice with Theodore Baerg and, for the past eight years, with Aprile Millo. His notable First Nations themed performances include Louis Riel in Elizabeth Raum's *Eos: The Dream of Nicholas Flood Davin* (Opera Saskatchewan/University of Regina); Sarastro in *The Magic Flute: Quest for the Box of Shadows* (Vancouver Opera in Schools); baritone soloist in *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii* (Bruce Ruddell); and Elizabeth Raum's *Requiem for Wounded Knee*, recorded for CBC.



## PRODUCTION INFORMATION



### AVAILABLE DESIGN ELEMENTS

All Scenery (for prosceniums or halls/black box studios), props and costumes. Also includes orchestra parts, English and Gitxsan surtitles, video design files, sound design files and stage management operational documentation.

7 Singers  
 7 Musicians  
 1 Conductor  
 1 Stage Manager  
 1 Assistant Stage Manager  
 1 Head Technician  
 1 Surtile Operator

### CREW REQUIREMENTS

Crew requirements may vary for each venue

|                                | <u>Set up</u> | <u>Running</u> | <u>Strike</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Loaders / Grips / Carpenters   | 4             | 0              | 4             |
| Fly persons                    | 0             | 0              | 0             |
| Props                          | 0             | 1              |               |
| Electrics (design dependant)   | 3             | 0              | 3             |
| Audio / video / LX operator    | 1             | 1              | 1             |
| Wardrobe/hair/makeup           | 1             | 1              | 1             |
| Approximate time – set install | 4 - 5 hours   |                |               |
| Scene Changes – None           |               |                |               |

## ORIGINAL THEATRE INFORMATION

Suitable for small proscenium theatres, black-box studios or community halls.

|                              | <u>Small theatre</u> | <u>Black-box theatre/Hall</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Proscenium opening – width:  | 24'-0"               | N/A                           |
| Proscenium opening – height: | 17'                  | 18' ceiling minimum           |
| Plaster line to US wall:     | 16'-5"               | 25'-0" minimum                |
| Center line to SR wall:      | 20'-3"               | 21'-9" minimum                |
| Center line to SL wall:      | 17'-0"               | 28'-0" minimum (orch SL)      |
| Size of loading doors:       | 7'-8" w x 8'-0" h    | 6'-0" w x 7'-0" h             |

## SET TECHNICAL INFORMATION

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Fixed/temporary pipes or line sets for electrics | : 2  |
| Line sets for scenery                            | : 0  |
| Fixed/temporary pipes or line sets for masking   | : 4 (can be done with less)                    |
| Hardware available                               | : All scenery hardware                         |
| Not included                                     | : House masking                                |
| Storage and Shipping                             | : One 18' cube van or a 20' shipping container |

## SCENIC PROJECTION AND AUDIO INFORMATION

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Projection & sound media | : all Q-Lab files (2 computers, network triggers – one operator) |
| Not included             | : 2-Macbook Pro and 1x 12,000 lumen video projector              |

## PROPERTIES INFORMATION

Properties included : all furniture and hand props

## COSTUME INFORMATION

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Number of principal costumes | : 5F/2M        |
| Included                     | : All wardrobe |

## SUPERTITLES

English & Gitxsan supertitles projection media – Power point files

## CONTACT

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