

2024/25 SEASON LIVE AT THE ROYAL THEATRE

MOZART'S

# LA CLEMENZA DI TITO

OCTOBER 16, 18, 22 AT 7:30PM

OCTOBER 20 AT 2:30PM

SUNG IN ITALIAN WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

PRODUCTION SPONSOR



HOST HOTEL



MOZART'S

# LA CLEMENZA DI TITO

PRODUCTION PATRON

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## La clemenza di Tito

**Music** by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

**Libretto** by Caterino Mazzolà

**First Performance** on September 6, 1791 at the Estates Theatre in Prague

October 16, 18, 22 at 7:30 pm

October 20 at 2:30 pm | The Royal Theatre

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

This performance is approximately 2 hours 45 minutes (including 20 minute intermission).

**CAST** in order of vocal appearance

Tito ..... Andrew Haji

Vitellia ..... Tracy Cantin

Sesto ..... Taylor Raven

Servilia ..... Julia Dawson

Annio ..... Reilly Nelson

Publio ..... Stephen Hegedus

With the Victoria Symphony and Pacific Opera Chorus

**CREATIVE TEAM**

Conductor ..... Giuseppe Pietraroia

Stage Director ..... Jennifer Tarver

WML Assistant Conductor ..... Kelly Lin

Assistant Stage Director ..... Amanda Testini

Set & Costume Designer ..... Camellia Koo

Lighting Designer ..... Kimberly Purtell

Chorus Director & Principal Coach ..... Kimberley-Ann Bartzak

Stage Manager ..... Christopher Sibbald

Assistant Stage Manager ..... Katerina Sokyrko

Assistant Stage Manager ..... Kelsey Cain

Apprentice Stage Manager ..... Castor Angus

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**House Programme Design:** Trapeze Communications

**Synopsis:** Robert Holliston **Production & Editor:** Rhonda Ganz

Cast and programme are subject to change



## A Note from Brenna

Welcome to Pacific Opera Victoria's 2024/25 season, dear new friends!

I am beyond thrilled to have you joining us for our opening production this season, and I am deeply honoured to have been so welcomed into such an extraordinary team and wonderful city. Following in the steps of Timothy Vernon is a daunting and exciting task and I am so pleased to be able to welcome you on our next adventure: Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*. This is a masterpiece of psychological exploration both dramatically and musically. It offers a poignant delve into human nature, leadership, and the power of forgiveness.

As we dive into Tito's journey, I invite you to consider your own role in shaping the world around you. How can we cultivate compassion, empathy, and understanding in our daily lives? *La clemenza di Tito* provides a wonderful lens through which to examine these questions.

This season, we're embarking on a collective quest to be our better selves. In a world often marked by division, uncertainty, and challenges, this theme feels more poignant than ever. Through the power of opera, we hope to inspire and uplift, fostering a sense of unity and hope. The power of music is undeniable. It can deeply engage us and empower us. Through *La clemenza di Tito*, I hope you find your passions ignited, your imagination sparked, and your spirit awakened.

I look forward to this season's music that will inspire us all to be our best self and to embrace the transformative power of music. Thank you for being here with us. Let's embark on this journey together!

BRENNA CORNER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## Synopsis

### ACT ONE

Vitellia, daughter of the late Roman emperor Vitellius (who was deposed by the present Emperor Tito's father), wishes to regain the throne as the consort of Tito, whom she fancies. When she learns that Tito plans to marry the princess Berenice, Vitellia persuades Tito's friend Sesto, who is in love with her, to assassinate the Emperor. But the Roman public's demand that Tito choose a Roman empress causes him to renounce Berenice and send her away; thus Vitellia's hopes that Tito will choose her as his Empress are revived, and she calls off the hit.



Tito now chooses Sesto's sister Servilia as his bride, and sends Sesto's friend Annio to inform Servilia. Annio and Servilia, unbeknownst to Tito, are in love, so they are saddened by this news. Servilia, sworn to obey her Emperor, nevertheless decides to be truthful about her real feelings; moved by Servilia's honesty, Tito relinquishes her and blesses her betrothal to Annio.

Simultaneously, Vitellia learns of Tito's plan to marry Servilia, and she once again urges Sesto to assassinate him. Just after Sesto leaves to do the deed, Annio arrives with a guard to escort Vitellia to Tito, who has now chosen her as his empress. Wracked with guilt, Vitellia regrets sending Sesto on his murderous mission, but it is too late.

Sesto is himself conscience-stricken, but the Capitol is set on fire. It is the accepted signal to overthrow the emperor. While the flames and mayhem spread, the Roman people express their terror. When Sesto tells Vitellia that Tito is slain, she begs him not to incriminate himself (and expose her own part in the murder). All of Rome lament the death of Tito.

### ACT TWO

In the imperial palace, Annio informs Sesto that Tito is still alive: amid the smoke and flames, Sesto had mistook another man for the Emperor. Sesto confesses his crime, but won't divulge any reason for his actions. Vitellia begs Sesto to flee, but a fellow conspirator has already betrayed him, and he is summarily arrested.

The Roman citizens rejoice that their Emperor has been spared. Tito cannot believe that Sesto would ever betray him, but is informed that Sesto has admitted his guilt before the Senate. Tito, having been urged to show compassion, refuses to sign the death decree until he has given Sesto a chance to explain himself. Sesto admits his crimes to Tito but declines to implicate Vitellia. Tito reluctantly condemns Sesto to death. Left alone, he is torn between his duty and his feelings, concluding that he can reign only if his power is rooted in love. Annio and Servilia beg Vitellia to use her influence to save Sesto; this means that she must admit her own guilt.

At the arena where the conspirators await execution, Tito is about to show mercy to Sesto when Vitellia arrives and confesses her guilt. Again choosing clemency against all odds, Tito pardons Vitellia, Sesto, and all of the co-conspirators. As Tito's subjects sing his praise, he declares that the gods may take his life on the day when clemency and the good of his country ceases to become his greatest concern.

ROBERT HOLLISTON, CURATOR OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



Scan for extended notes and more  
*La clemenza di Tito*  
content online

## Artist Profiles



### **ANDREW HAJI | Tito**

Tenor Andrew Haji is one of the most sought-after voices on concert and operatic stages across North America and Europe. The titular role in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* marks his Pacific Opera Victoria début. Haji's upcoming season includes débuts with the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Dresden Philharmonic, Kansas City Symphony, and NDR Hannover. Andrew also returns to the Houston Symphony, Carnegie Hall with Orchestra of St. Luke's, and Boston's Handel and Haydn Society.



### **TRACY CANTIN | Vitellia**

Praised for her "full, gleaming sound" (*Chicago Tribune*), Canadian soprano Tracy Cantin "has it all—agility, power and dazzling coloratura" (*Chicago Sun-Times*). Tracy made her Pacific Opera Victoria début with her acclaimed performance of Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. She is excited to return this season as Vitellia in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, and to make her début with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir as the soprano soloist for Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*.



### **TAYLOR RAVEN | Sesto**

Taylor Raven will make her company and role début as Sesto in *La clemenza di Tito*. Recent season highlights include *Rosina* (Seattle Opera) and *Carmen* (Des Moines Metro Opera). She originated the role of Charmian (*Antony and Cleopatra*) and will soon make her début at the Metropolitan Opera reprising the role. Other upcoming highlights include débuts with the Minnesota Orchestra (*Mozart Requiem*), Duisburger Philharmoniker (Perry's *Stabat Mater*) and a solo recital with the Kaufman Music Center.



### **JULIA DAWSON | Servilia**

Hailed as "radiant and riveting" (*Opera News*) and a "spitfire" (*NYTimes*), Canadian soprano Julia Dawson makes her company and role début with *Servilia*. A winner of the George London Award and the Anny-Schlemm-Preis, she has performed with the Munich Philharmonic and L'Orchestre Philharmonique, Tiroler Festspiele Erl, and was a member of the ensemble and Opernstudio at Oper Frankfurt from 2015–2019. Dawson trained at the Academy of Vocal Arts, Rice University, and Oberlin Conservatory.



### **REILLY NELSON | Annio**

Soprano Reilly Nelson, hailed as "a revelation" by *Opera News*, brings her "distinctly warm and burnished" sound to stages across North America and Europe, captivating audiences with her deep commitment to artistry, fueled by an intuitively honest and compelling dramatic sensibility. Originally from Northern Ontario, Reilly's profound connection to her roots informs her passionate approach to music-making, where authenticity and sincerity are paramount. This fall, Reilly makes her Canadian début as Annio in *La clemenza di Tito* with Pacific Opera Victoria.



### **STEPHEN HEGEDUS | Publio**

Hailed as a singer possessing "...an instrument of rare beauty, majestic and commanding from the bottom of his range to the top" (*Ottawa Citizen*), bass-baritone Stephen Hegedus is thrilled to return to Pacific Opera Victoria after performances of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda* (2012), Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (2016), and Puccini's *La bohème* (2018). This season, Hegedus also returns to the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic, and Les Violons du Roy in concert, and Opera Atelier for Charpentier's *David and Jonathan*.



*Read extended bios and meet our artists online*



## Creative Team



### **GIUSEPPE PIETRAROIA | Conductor**

Principal Conductor for Pacific Opera Victoria and Associate Conductor for the Victoria Symphony, Giuseppe Pietraroia has guest conducted at l'Orchestre Métropolitain, Orchestra London, Calgary Philharmonic, Hamilton Philharmonic, and the Vancouver, Toronto, Okanagan, Regina, Kingston and Thunder Bay symphony orchestras. In his role as Chorus Master, the Pacific Opera Chorus has become one of Victoria's leading choral groups. In addition, he has conducted productions for l'Opéra de Montréal, l'Opéra de Québec, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Edmonton Opera, Opera New Brunswick, Calgary Opera's Emerging Artist Program, and the Institut Canadien d'Art Vocal.



### **JENNIFER TARVER | Stage Director**

Award-winning director, creator, and dramaturg, Jennifer Tarver has worked internationally in both theatre and opera for over 25 years. Her recent and upcoming productions include her début with Pacific Opera Victoria for *La clemenza di Tito*, a staged Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* (Edmonton Opera), Rota's *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze* (University of Toronto), and the première of Marshall's *Pomegranate* (Canadian Opera Company).



### **KELLY LIN | Women in Musical Leadership Assistant Conductor**

Praised for her magnetic, captivating, and inspiring interpretation, Chinese-Canadian conductor Kelly Lin enjoys an active performing career across Canada and internationally. As the recipient of the Hnatyshyn Foundation Christa and Franz-Paul Decker Fellowship in Conducting, Kelly obtained her master's degree in orchestral conducting from the Schulich School of Music, where her mentors include Alexis Hauser and Guillaume Bourgogne. Kelly has recently been named a fellow of the Tapestry Opera WML program.



### **AMANDA TESTINI | Assistant Director**

Amanda Testini (she/her) is excited to be making her Pacific Opera début! She is an Italian-Canadian choreographer and director based on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. Amanda has worked with the Arts Club, Bard on the Beach, the Cultch, Theatre Replacement, Belfry Theatre, Banff Centre, Savage Society, Opera Kelowna, shameless hussy, Newworld, Studio 58, TheatreUBC, Electric Company, Vancouver Opera, Axis, The Glimmerglass Festival, and Edmonton Opera.



### **CAMELLIA KOO | Set & Costume Designer**

Camellia Koo is a Toronto-based set and costume designer for theatre, opera, dance and site-specific performance installations. For Pacific Opera, designs include set and costumes for *La bohème*, *Simon Boccanegra*, and *Maria Stuarda*. Other recent opera designs include collaborations with Santa Fe Opera, Tapestry Opera, Edmonton Opera, Helikon Opera (Moscow), Boston Lyric Opera, and *Against the Grain*. Recent designs for theatre include collaborations with Canadian Stage Company, Electric Company, Souleppper Theatre, Belfry Theatre, and The Shaw Festival.



### **KIMBERLY PURTELL | Lighting Designer**

Kimberly is a Toronto-based lighting designer for theatre, opera and dance. Previously for Pacific Opera she designed *The Barber of Seville* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*. She has designed over 500 productions across Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Prague, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Moscow, and Mongolia. She has received three Dora Mavor Moore Awards, the Pauline McGibbon Award, a Montreal English Theatre Award, a Toronto Theatre Critics Award, an Ottawa Critics Circle Award, and an Elizabeth Sterling Award.



### **KIMBERLEY-ANN BARTCZAK | Chorus Director & Principal Coach**

A native of Montreal, Kimberley-Ann Bartczak is a conductor, pianist and vocal coach. Currently the Principal Coach and Music Administrator at Pacific Opera Victoria, she recently conducted the world première of the youth opera *Rumpelstiltskin and the Unlovable Children* at The Glimmerglass Festival. She is a choir director at Victoria Children's Choir, a supernumerary player at the Victoria Symphony, and performs regularly, both locally and internationally.





**CHRISTOPHER SIBBALD | Stage Manager**

Working closely with production and artistic staff to support the creation and execution of Pacific Opera productions, Christopher has worked with the company in various capacities for over a decade. A graduate of UVic's Department of Theatre (BFA 2010) he has worked in theatres across Canada including the Belfry Theatre, and both the Stratford Festival and Charlottetown Festival. Favourite credits include *Fidelio*, *Flight* (Pacific Opera); *4000 Miles*, *Griffin & Sabine* (Belfry Theatre); and *Christina, the Girl King* (Stratford Festival).



**KATERINA SOKYRKO | Assistant Stage Manager**

Katerina is thrilled to be returning to Pacific Opera. Her previous credits include *Ainadamar*, *Die Walküre*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Birds*, *Don Giovanni*, *Flight*, *Il trittico*, *La traviata*, *La bohème*, *Les Feluettes*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Missing*. Elsewhere, recent shows include *Jersey Boys*, *Anne of Green Gables* (Charlottetown Festival); *Hamlet-911* (Stratford Festival); *Hurry Hard* (Chemainus Theatre Festival); *Snow White*, *Selfie* (Young People's Theatre); *Mary Poppins* (Grand Theatre); and five seasons at the Blyth Festival.



**KELSEY CAIN | Assistant Stage Manager**

Kelsey is thrilled to return to Pacific Opera Victoria as Assistant Stage Manager for *La clemenza di Tito*. Select credits include *Marriage of Figaro* (ASM, Pacific Opera, 2024), *Die Walküre* (ASM, Pacific Opera, 2023), *9 to 5* (ASM, Chemainus Theatre Festival), *Ghost the Musical* (Apprentice Stage Manager, Chemainus Theatre Festival, 2023), *The Lion*, *The Witch*, and *the Wardrobe* (SM, Kaleidoscope Theatre for Young People, 2023), and *Macbeth* (App. SM, Canadian Opera Company, 2023). Enjoy the show!



Pacific Opera Chorus and Supernumeraries

# Pacific Opera Chorus and Supernumeraries

<b>Soprano</b>	<b>Alto</b>	<b>Tenor</b>	<b>Baritones/Basses</b>
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Cory Balzer	<b>Bass</b>	Mike Oswald
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Julian Vitek	Michelle Feng, Principal	Kimberley-Ann Bartczak
<b>Viola</b>	Russell Bajer	<i>Special thanks to the Victoria Conservatory of Music and Dr. Oliver and Ms. Gwen Thompson Robinow for the fortepiano used in this production.</i>
Kenji Fusé, Principal	<b>Clarinet</b>	
Stacey Boal	David Boutin-Bourque, Principal	
Kay Cochran	Jennifer Christensen	
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The Flight of the Hummingbird 2020. Sara Adèle Schabas as Dukdukdiya/Hummingbird. Photo: Tim Matheson  
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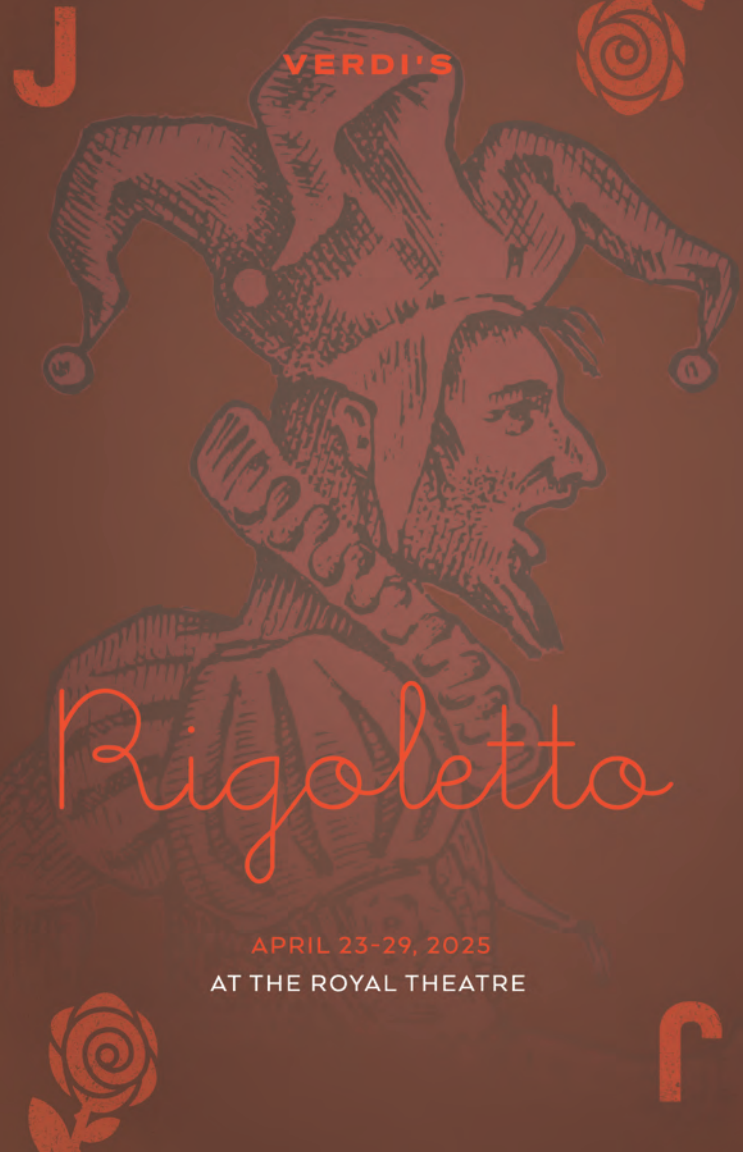
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