

Media Release  
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## Pacific Opera Victoria Presents Rachel Portman's Timeless Classic – The Little Prince

Victoria, BC – Opening on February 19 at Victoria's Royal Theatre, Pacific Opera Victoria presents Academy Award-winning composer Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*, bringing Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's beloved worldwide literary classic to life. Set against the backdrop of a whimsical yet emotional adventure, Portman's music weaves a captivating tapestry of emotions, mirroring the wonder and innocence of the original story. The production will grace the stage of the Royal Theatre for four performances, February 19, 21, and 25 at 7:30 pm, and February 23 at 2:30 pm.

"*The Little Prince* sparkles with all the joy, wonder, and humanity that many will remember from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's original text," says Artistic Director Brenna Corner. "I am thrilled to be making my Pacific Opera Victoria directorial debut with this charming opera for the young at heart."

The opera follows the journey of a young prince who travels from planet to planet, encountering a host of eccentric characters and learning valuable lessons about love, friendship, and the complexities of adulthood. Portman's score captures the essence of each encounter, from the melodic whimsy of the Prince's encounters with the Fox and the Rose to the stirring crescendos of the Prince's joyous sunsets. Through Portman's masterful composition, the opera delves into themes of imagination, loneliness, and the universal quest for meaning. *The Little Prince's* exploration of the human condition resonates deeply with audiences of all ages, inviting them to reflect on their own lives and relationships.

In the role of the Little Prince are two young singers who will each take the stage for 2 performances, 9 year old Jake Apricity Hetherington, and 11 year old Callum Spivak. When chosen for the role, both were asked what excited them most about bringing this story to life on stage with Pacific Opera, they responded enthusiastically. Callum saying, "*The Little Prince* is a story loved by all ages. I have been blessed (and a bit cursed) with an enormous imagination myself, so I am excited to be part of sparking the imaginations of children and adults through the incredible musicality of Rachel Portman's beautiful work."

Jake responded, "Being on stage performing, feeling that amazing feeling of bringing life and emotion to the people in the audience. That's one of the biggest reasons I do opera. It's one of the things that really makes me feel happy and proud inside. I'm also really excited to meet the cast and crew. I'm so looking forward to seeing the costumes. I mean, I'm actually going to be standing in the shoes of the Little Prince!"

In the role of Pilot, Calgary native, baritone, Andrew Love, returns to Pacific Opera. In 2021-2022, Andrew joined Pacific Opera for the filmed presentation of *For A Look Or A Touch* by Jake Heggie, and was previously seen on stage in *Carmen* (2012), *Maria Stuarda* (2012), and *La bohème* (2018). Joseph So, of Musical Toronto wrote of Andrew's performance in *La bohème* at Against the Grain Theatre, "top vocal honours this evening belonged to baritone Andrew Love as vocally wonderful and dramatically engaging Marcello."

Métis soprano Melody Courage, performs the role of The Rose. She will be remembered by Pacific Opera audiences as Native Girl in the 2017 world premiere of Marie Clements and Brian Current's opera *Missing*, coproduced by City Opera Vancouver and Pacific Opera. Sarah Petrescu wrote of her performance in the Victoria Times Colonist, "Soprano Melody Courage (Native Girl) had immense range and power as she sang first in Gitksan, a whispery and vowel-heavy dialect, and then in English."

The two act, two-hour and 15 minute production is conducted by Pacific Opera Principal Conductor, Giuseppe Pietrarroia, and features an outstanding artistic team lead by Brenna Corner in her company début. Award-winning set designer James Rotondo makes his Pacific Opera début, with costume design by Judith Bowen and lighting design by Sophie Tang. Twenty-three young singers from the Victoria Children's Choir perform as stars and birds in the chorus.

With its lush orchestrations and poignant lyricism, *The Little Prince* opera is a testament to the enduring power of Saint-Exupéry's timeless tale. Portman's ability to evoke emotion through music elevates the story to new heights, leaving audiences spellbound from beginning to end. *The Little Prince* is a heartfelt celebration of innocence, imagination, and the enduring power of love.

Tickets for single performances to the Royal Theatre shows start at \$35, with \$15 tickets available for youth under 18. To keep Pacific Opera accessible, Community Preview tickets are available to students and community organizations for \$15. For more information about the 2024/25 season including tickets, visit: [Pacific Opera 2024 2025 season](https://www.pacificopera.ca/season) .

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