

For Immediate Release Contact: Lydia Weyrich

Feb. 16, 2025 lydia@irvinpr.com, 740-398-4377

**Opera Columbus Presents Three Columbus Premieres for the Company’s 44th Season**

*The 2025-26 season will follow the theme of* ***From Page to Stage: Stories in Music***

**Columbus, OH** **—** Opera Columbus has announced a 44th season filled with literary classics, including three Columbus premieres\*. Under the direction of General Director + CEO, Julia Noulin-Mérat, the company’s 2025-26 season will take on the theme of “*From Page to Stage: Stories in Music*” with *Rappaccini’s Daughter\*, The Old Man and the Sea\*, The Anonymous Lover\**, *La Traviata*, and the annual *Cooper-Bing Competition*.

The season will kick off with ***Rappaccini’s Daughter****,* telling the tragic story of Beatriz, a girl trapped by her father’s botanical experiments. Exposed to the toxic flora of Dr. Rappaccini’s gardens, Beatriz has become poisonous to all living things, isolating her from the human experience. Hope, however, arrives in the form of Giovanni, a young medical student infatuated with her beauty and set on assisting in her escape. Ending with a startling twist, audiences are forced to reconsider motives, meanings and morals, deciding for themselves how far they would go for a chance at freedom. Daniel Catán’s music has been lauded across the globe for its lush orchestrations and captivatingly beautiful vocal lines. The production will take place at the Southern Theatre on September 19 + 21, 2025. Directing debut by **Brandon Shaw McKnight** (2023-25 CRANE Directing Fellow) and Music Direction by **Rolando Salazar** (*Maria de Buenos Aires*).

Following in October, **based on the novel by Ernest Hemingway** and produced by Beth Morrison Projects in a Columbus partnership between the Wexner Center for the Arts and Opera Columbus, ***The Old Man and the Sea*** will be at Mershon Auditorium on October 10 + 12, 2025. This opera draws inspiration from the final, fevered visions of Ernest Hemingway in his last days—a period marked by introspection as he recalled vivid portraits of his life alongside images from his celebrated masterpiece, *The Old Man and the Sea*, one of the seminal works of 20th-century American literature. Composed by Paola Prestini with a libretto by Royce Vavrek and Directed and Co-Created by **Karmina Šilec**, the production weaves together dual narratives: one that reimagines Hemingway’s legacy and another that captures the quiet beauty of everyday life. The result is a thought-provoking exploration of aging, legacy, and our enduring relationship with the oceans.

Wrapping up the Columbus premieres, Opera Columbus will present ***The Anonymous Lover*** at the Palace Theatre on February 13 + 15, 2026 just in time for Valentine’s Day. A romantic comedy ahead of its time, *The Anonymous Lover* centers on young widow Léontine. When she begins to receive a series of passionate letters from a secret admirer, she wrestles with whether she can love again, especially when it becomes apparent her friend Valcour is the unsigned author. Will love win?Joseph Bologne’s stirring music is complemented by a fresh book adaptation from the pen of Obie Award-winning Boston playwright Kirsten Greenidge, mixing English dialogue with the original French singing. The third of Bologne’s six operas, *The Anonymous Lover* was his most successful opera, and the only one that has survived to this day. The work holds a significant place in the annals of music history, standing as one of the first known operas composed by a Black artist. Directed by Dennis Whitehead Darling (*La boheme, Maria de Buenos Aires*) and Music Direction by OC’s Principal Guest Conductor Dr. Everett McCorvey (*Carmen, The Threepenny Opera*).

Adding a fourth show to the Opera Columbus season and in a co-production with Columbus Symphony and CAPA, next up will be ***La Traviata*** at the Ohio Theatre on April 25 + 26, 2026. Adapted from the novel “The Lady of The Camellias” by Alexander Dumas, *La Travita* is the tale of Paris' most winning courtesan Violetta Valery and the honest nobleman Alfredo. Alfredo finds himself lost to Violetta’s charms and manages to persuade her to move to the country with him. But abandoning her life of kept luxury proves easier said than done and soon the besotted couple find the outside world encroaching on their love nest and their reputation has spread much further than they hoped. Officially the most performed opera worldwide, *La Traviata* is Verdi's twisting love story that explores class, reputation and devotion, with heartbreaking consequences. Directed by Eve Summer (*Tosca, Rigoletto*) and Music Direction by CSO’s Rossen Milanov (*West Side Story, Eugene Onegin*).

The season will conclude with the ***Cooper-Bing Competition***, an internationally recognized vocal competition that celebrates and supports emerging young artists in opera. Emceed by WOSU’s Christopher Purdy, five finalists will compete for the grand prize of $10,000 at the Southern Theatre on May 17, 2026.

“There is no better feeling than wrapping up a record-breaking season by announcing another season packed with so much excitement,” said Noulin-Mérat. “All of our programming in 2025 and 2026 is designed to attract people of all different interests, and we couldn’t be more thrilled to have so many community collaborations woven in.”

**TICKETS**
Subscriptions will go on sale May 12, and single tickets will go on sale June 9. All tickets and subscriptions can be purchased at [www.operacolumbus.org.](http://www.operacolumbus.org/) Production tickets range from $17-$135, and Cooper-Bing tickets are $19.

**###**

**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 artforms. 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
Twitter: @OperaColumbus

TikTok: @OperaColumbus

Join the conversation by using #OperaCBUS #MakeItYours

Opera Columbus’ 2025-26 season is made possible thanks to funding from The Columbus Foundation, Greater Columbus Arts Council, Nationwide, and the Ohio Arts Council, with additional support from Crane Group, Cult Marketing, and The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center-Voice Center.

**###**