Alexander Neef, General Director

Alexander Neef, appointed General Director of the Canadian Opera Company in June 2008, has worked with some of the most prestigious arts organizations in the world.

His career as an artistic administrator has taken him from the Salzburg Festival to the RuhrTriennale in Germany, Opéra national de Paris and New York City Opera, to leading the Canadian Opera Company, Canada's largest opera company and one of the most important in North America.

He has been instrumental in the COC debuts of numerous Canadian and international artists, and it was under his leadership that the company returned twice to the world-renowned Brooklyn Academy of Music with its spectacular production of Robert Lepage's *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables* in March 2011 and Zhang Huan's theatrically transcendent production of Handel's *Semele*. It is under Neef's direction that the COC delivered the world premiere presentation of Canadian composer Barbara Monk Feldman's *Pyramus and Thisbe* in fall 2015. The last world premiere at the COC took place in 1999. Subsequent world premieres scheduled to date include the COC commissioned projects of *Hadrian*, composed by Rufus Wainwright and libretto by Daniel MacIvor, in 2018/2019.

Neef's many credits for the company also include increasing the public profile and professional development opportunities of the COC's Ensemble Studio program, a training program for young opera professionals. In 2011, an annual Ensemble Studio Competition was launched, inviting the public to be part of the singers' professional journeys by opening the final round of auditions for the Ensemble Studio to an audience. In recent years the COC has also introduced a season launch, exclusive to its subscribers. The annual event serves to preview the forthcoming season and offers a deeper level of engagement with some of the company's most supportive patrons.

Neef has a master of arts from Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen where he studied Latin Philology and Modern History.

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