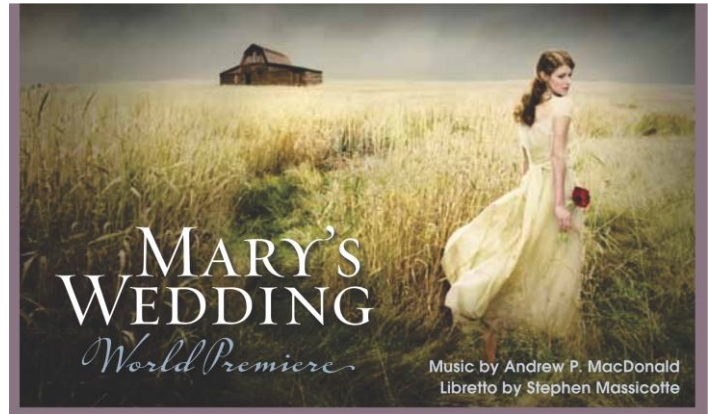




# Mary's Wedding – An Opera About Us

Pacific Opera Victoria is proud to announce a new Canadian opera *Mary's Wedding* which will make its world premiere in Victoria on November 10, 2011.



The opera has been commissioned and developed by Pacific Opera Victoria. It is composed by Andrew P. MacDonald, with a libretto by Stephen Massicotte, based on his award winning play, *Mary's Wedding*.

**The story is eternal.** On the eve of her wedding, Mary Chalmers reminisces about her first love, Charlie, a prairie farm boy who, along with a generation of young Canadians, went off to fight in World War I.

**The fictional lives of the young lovers are intertwined with historical events** and with the real-life character of Lieutenant Gordon Flowerdew, an Englishman who had settled in British Columbia before enlisting in the Great War. In the 1918 battle of Moreuil Wood, Flowerdew carried out one of the last great cavalry assaults in history, leading a squadron of Lord Strathcona's Horse against German rifles and machine guns, helping to stop the German offensive. Flowerdew died from his wounds and was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

The opera explores the fleeting nature of time and the lasting power of love, shifting from past to present, from Canada to Europe, from reality to dream. The rumble of prairie thunderstorms echoes the crash of artillery barrages; a gallop through open fields foreshadows the fatal cavalry charge; ladies' teas and tentative young love are set against the horror of the battles of Ypres and Moreuil Wood, in which Canada came of age as a nation.

**Pacific Opera Victoria is pleased to announce partnerships** to celebrate our community's connections with our own history and to share the immediacy and relevance of this beautiful and compelling story.

**The World of Mary's Wedding: Reminiscences of WWI** – Exhibits of WWI Memorabilia from the University of Victoria Archives and Special Collections will be on display

- At the McPherson Library Gallery at the University of Victoria, October 22 to November 17, 2011
- At the McPherson Playhouse throughout the run of *Mary's Wedding*, November 8 to 20, 2011
- On a dedicated website to be launched in fall 2011 as a permanent legacy of this new opera.

**Lord Strathcona's Horse** – On the opening night of *Mary's Wedding*, Pacific Opera will honour the Canadian regiment who fought the battle of Moreuil Wood, and to whom our characters in the opera belong.

**Mary's Wedding Memory Project** – *Mary's Wedding* is very much about us and our heritage as Western Canadians – we are the children of *Mary's Wedding*. In celebration of this heritage, we invite the community to submit stories and photos to a dedicated forum on POV's web site, so that we can share the impact of WWI on our own lives, on our families and our community. These reminiscences will be published on our web site and displayed at the McPherson Theatre during the run of *Mary's Wedding* in November.

To explore the forum and share your stories, please visit [www.pov.bc.ca](http://www.pov.bc.ca).

## Cast and Creative Team of *Mary's Wedding*

Mary: Betty Wayne Allison	Charlie: Thomas Macleay	Sergeant Flowerdew: Alain Coulombe	Pacific Opera Victoria Chorus
Artistic Director and Conductor: Timothy Vernon		Director: Michael Shamata	Designer: Ian Rye

We are profoundly grateful to the following for their support of the commissioning and production of *Mary's Wedding*.



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