

PRESS RELEASE

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JEAN-WILLY KUNZ NAMED ORGANIST IN RESIDENCE FOR THE GRAND ORGUE PIERRE BÉIQUE

Montreal, March 18, 2013 – The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal is happy to announce the nomination of **Jean-Willy Kunz to the position of organist in residence**. This nomination concludes an extended selection process led by a committee created specifically for the occasion. It also marks an important step towards the inauguration of the Grand Orgue Pierre Béique, which will take place on May 28, 2014 and will close the 2013-2014 season.

In addition to playing with the Orchestra during the season, Jean-Willy Kunz will see to the development and the showcasing of the Grand Orgue Pierre Béique, notably through the coordination of concerts and organ recitals along with outreach activities. His mandate will also be to make this magnificent instrument better known thanks to programs designed to heighten awareness among the general public, young listeners and the upcoming generation (graduate students). He will answer questions of a technical nature from guest organists and partners and will be responsible for maintenance of the instrument in collaboration with Casavant Frères. The organist in residence is expected to take up his duties (2-year mandate) in November 2013.

Over 500 people attended the final auditions held at église Saint-Jean-Baptiste and at Maison symphonique de Montréal on Sunday, March 17.

JEAN-WILLY KUNZ

Jean-Willy Kunz discovered the piano and the organ with Joseph Coppey at the Conservatoire de Grenoble and later studied organ with Louis Robilliard at the Conservatoire de Lyon. At the conclusion of his classical studies he expanded his activities and studied jazz piano with Mario Stantchev at the Conservatoire de Lyon and founded a saxophone-organ duo with Frédéric Lagoutte. He returned to classical studies, in organ and harpsichord, with Mireille Lagacé at the Conservatoire de Montréal, and in 2011 completed his doctorate in organ performance with John Grew at McGill University.

Mr. Kunz earned second prize at the Concours international d'orgue in Chartres in 2008, as well as third prize and the Richard Bradshaw Audience Prize at the Canadian International Organ Competition in Montreal in 2011. He now divides his time between organ recitals, teaching a course in analysis and harmony at Université de Montréal, and concerts with the Société de Musique Contemporaine du Québec (where he is organist) and with the Caprice ensemble (where he is harpsichordist and organist).

INTERNATIONAL SELECTION COMMITTEE

Created specifically with the mandate of selecting the organist in residence of the OSM, the selection committee is made up of specialists in the organ field and of recognized musicians:

Kent Nagano, music director of the OSM

Pierre Grandmaison, tenured organist for the organs of Notre-Dame Basilica in Montreal

John Grew, organist at McGill University and artistic director of the Summer Organ Academy

Olivier Latty, tenured organist at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris and OSM organist emeritus

Jaquelin Rochette, artistic director of Casavant Frères

Noël Spinelli, cofounder of the Canadian International Organ Competition

Patrick Wedd, music director and organist at Christ Church Cathedral in Montreal

As organist emeritus, Olivier Latty's duties will consist of performing with the Orchestra as soloist or presenting a recital annually, in addition to serving as music consultant for all organ programming. Moreover, he will evaluate the condition of the instrument on an annual basis.

The Grand Orgue Pierre Béique

The Maison symphonique de Montréal organ, which will be INAUGURATED ON MAY 28, 2014, was designed and built on behalf of the OSM by the house of Casavant with the collaboration of architects Diamond Schmitt + Ædifica for its visual design, and will be the Orchestra's property. This is a large organ intended for orchestral use, and is recorded in the books of the Saint-Hyacinthe builder as Opus 3,900. It consists of 109 registers, 83 stops, 116 ranks and 6,489 pipes.

It bears the name Grand Orgue Pierre Béique in tribute to the OSM founder and first general manager (from 1939 to 1970). An astute administrator and a committed music lover, Pierre Béique took over from Mrs. Athanase David, who had acted, since 1934, as secretary of the Board of Directors of the Société des concerts symphoniques de Montréal, the forerunner of the OSM.

The purchase of this organ was made possible courtesy of Mrs. Jacqueline Desmarais, who assumed the total cost and wished to perpetuate, through its name, the memory of Mr. Pierre Béique's irreplaceable contribution to the OSM's mission of excellence.

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The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal wishes to thank
Loto-Québec, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des arts de Montréal for their generous support.

Information: 514 842-9951 or www.osm.ca

The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal is presented by Hydro-Québec.

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