

## Kent Nagano's 10<sup>th</sup> season with the OSM

### Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* as a grand opening to the 2015-2016 season

### 10 great moments during the season to celebrate this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary

### An extra performance for the concert *Kent Nagano conducts Bolero*

**Montreal, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015** – The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal is delighted to be celebrating Kent Nagano's 10<sup>th</sup> season as music director! To kick off the season, Maestro Nagano will conduct a concert version of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, the sole opera by Debussy and a masterwork, on September 8 and 9, at 8:00 p.m., in Maison symphonique de Montréal. For the occasion, audiences will have the privilege of hearing a few of today's most gifted performers, including some of the finest operatic voices in Québec, accompanied by the OSM musicians and Chorus.

#### A dramatic love story

Premiered in 1902, the opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* is an invitation to lose oneself in the opaque beauties of the imaginary kingdom of Allemonde. A lyrical drama in five acts born of the symbolist movement, adapted from Maurice Maeterlinck's play, the work is a transposition of the Tristan and Yseult myth: the story of two young people irresistibly attracted to each other but whose love is impossible because, alas, the beautiful and enigmatic Mélisande is married to Prince Golaud, Pelléas's half-brother. A story, one suspects, with an unavoidably dramatic outcome. All the charm and beauty of the work are rooted in the inflections of the singing, which follow as closely as possible the flow of speech, and in the orchestral interludes depicting the mysterious beauties of the Kingdom.

#### Great performers

In the title roles, Swiss tenor **Bernard Richter**, for the first time with the OSM, and Québec soprano **Hélène Guilmette**. Mr. Richter was a member of the Opéra Studio in Bienne, Switzerland, and made his professional debut at Opéra de Bienne as well as on the stages of Neuchâtel and Lucerne. His wide-ranging repertoire consists of more than 25 roles. Hailed for her luminous tone, exemplary diction, refined musicality and a remarkable stage presence, Ms. Guilmette latter has sung a great deal of opera in addition to appearing, in recital and in concert, on the major stages of Europe under renowned conductors and directors. In the role of Golaud, Canadian bass-baritone **Philippe Sly**, first-prize and people's-choice award winner at the 2012 edition of the Montreal International Musical Competition, winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2011 and of the Jeune Soliste award of Radios Francophones Publiques as well as being selected a Révélation Radio-Canada Musique. A singer with an outstanding voice, bound for a very great career. Rounding out the cast, bass-baritone **Nicolas Testé** in the role of King Arkel, contralto **Marie-Nicole Lemieux** as Geneviève, soprano **Florie Valiquette** in the role of Yniold, and baritone **Hugo Laporte**, winner of the 2014 OSM Competition, in the roles of a doctor and a shepherd. The **OSM Chorus** is directed by **Andrew McGill**.

## **Ten highlights of Kent Nagano's 10<sup>th</sup> season**

The OSM season will continue with the presentation of a number of major works from the repertoire, when not featuring premieres or theme evenings, plus a series of organ recitals and two exceptional evenings bringing together film and music. As tradition dictates, a succession of internationally renowned conductors, ensembles and soloists will be joining the Orchestra's musicians. Also being held at Maison symphonique are special events and Youth Concerts that a varied public eager for musical discoveries is bound to enjoy. On the occasion of Kent Nagano's 10<sup>th</sup> year as the Orchestra's music director, the OSM presents 10 moments from a concert offer, celebrating this very special season.

### **1. *Penderecki: When music becomes a bearer of hope***

To mark the anniversaries of two major events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, **the 70<sup>th</sup> of the end of the Second World War and the centenary of the Armenian genocide**, the OSM on September 20 at Maison symphonique is presenting the concert *Bach, Brahms, Bernstein & Penderecki: Bearers of hope*. In the spirit of works influenced by the tragedies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the OSM is happy to welcome a prominent guest, Krzysztof Penderecki, a Polish composer who ranks with the most important creators of our time. He will be conducting for the first time in Canada his *Psaume III*, a work composed to underscore the Armenian genocide, which touched him personally, he being the descendant of an Armenian grandmother.

Moreover, at the concerts on September 17 and 19, Krzysztof Penderecki will also be leading the Orchestra in the *Adagio* from his Third Symphony. The other works on the program will be conducted by Yan Pascal Tortelier. As a prelude to these two orchestral evenings, Katerine Verebely will interview Krzysztof Penderecki and Patrick Masbourian at preconcert discussions.

The OSM thanks the Armenian Genocide Centennial Committee of Canada, who make the presence of Krzysztof Penderecki in Montreal possible, and who are cosponsors of *Psaume III*.

### **2. *Two great artists in residence: Gil Shaham and Maria João Pires***

#### **a) *Gil Shaham and the complete Bach Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin – in images***

During his upcoming season, the OSM is pleased to be welcoming the American violinist Gil Shaham as Larry and Cookie Rossy Family Foundation artist in residence. In addition to Mendelssohn's Concerto in E minor, which he will perform in April under Kent Nagano, and a masterclass intended for students, Gil Shaham will be offering his audience a rather rare experience at a recital on October 3. The artist will be presenting a reading of Bach's complete Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin, while an original film by David Michalek is projected on a giant screen. Gil Shaham and the filmmaker worked in close collaboration with the aim of rendering a world that sheds new light on these monumental works of the violin repertoire.

#### **b) *Maria João Pires in concert with the OSM and in recital***

The OSM is also happy to be welcoming Maria João Pires as Larry and Cookie Rossy Family Foundation artist in residence for a rare visit to North America next March. Much decorated and the recipient of numerous awards, including the Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts from Spain's Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, this most celebrated of Portuguese pianists will be performing, as soloist with the OSM, on March 3 and 5, 2016, Beethoven's *Third Piano Concerto*, a sublime work written in the spirit of the *Fifth Symphony* in key and in intensity. For a recital on March 6, the pianist whose refined playing has been acclaimed for decades by critics will offer a magnificent program consisting of Schubert's *Allegro in A minor for Piano Four Hands* and his *Fantasy in F minor* along with Beethoven's *Sonata in C minor, Op. 111* and *Seven Bagatelles, Op. 33*.

### **3. *Kent Nagano conducts Bolero: an extra show!***

In October, Maestro Nagano will conduct Ravel's *Boléro*, a famous work from the classical repertoire that figures in the highlights of OSM history. Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Richard Strauss's *Don Juan* complete this program, which is already sold out! The OSM is therefore happy to add a third performance of this concert, on Thursday, October 22, 2015, at 8:00 p.m., to the performances on October 20 and 21. Tickets for this extra concert are on sale now at [osm.ca](http://osm.ca) or at 514 842-9951.

### **4. *The OSM and Kent Nagano celebrate Halloween***

On October 29 and 30, Kent Nagano and the OSM are offering an event on the theme of Halloween. Evoking mystery and disquiet, the works selected will transport audiences to a world perfectly suited to the circumstances with among others Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre*, Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain*, Dukas's *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Dvořák's *Noon Witch* and Ives's *Halloween*. On October 30 at 9:00 p.m., after the concert, the party continues in the lobbies of Maison symphonique with the **OSM Éclaté** evening, to which the audience is invited to appear in disguise. More details to come on this not-to-be-missed Montréal Halloween event – which will feature a DJ and appropriate décor!

### **5. *Ives/Tchaikovsky: an unlikely duo?***

On November 17, 18 and 19, Kent Nagano presents a striking parallel between works by American composer Charles Ives (1874-1954) and one of the best-loved scores in the repertoire, the First Piano Concerto by Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), performed by Yefim Bronfman. Although the lives of the two composers overlap by close to 20 years, the contrast in their respective works testifies to the dizzying speed with which art and societies have evolved since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **6. *A new tale from Fred Pellerin: L'année du réveillon***

On the wings of the success of the first two encounters between the OSM and Fred Pellerin, the Orchestra is preparing a third collaboration with the renowned storyteller from Saint-Élie-de-Caxton. *L'année du réveillon* will be presented at Maison symphonique on December 9, 11 and 12, with a staging by René Richard Cyr. The concert, which promises to be memorable, will be broadcast by ICI Radio-Canada Télé and Radio over the holiday period.

### **7. *Tchaikovsky Festival***

To get 2016 started on the right foot, the OSM is presenting a *Tchaikovsky Festival*, a musical panorama that will showcase all the passion and depth flowing from the music of a composer who is romanticism incarnate. From January 6 to 8, three concerts under the direction of Italian conductor Oleg Caetani will take turns in featuring great soloists: Mischa Maisky (cello) in the *Variations on a Rocooco Theme*, Ekaterina Lekhina (soprano) in opera arias and Boris Berezovsky (piano) in the *Second Concerto*. And Tchaikovsky also inevitably means ballet music, the *1812 Overture*, the *Fourth Symphony*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Sleeping Beauty* and the *Symphony "Pathétique"*.

### **8. *Music and Images: movies accompanied live***

The soundtrack to a film takes on an altogether different complexion when performed on stage, live, by a symphony orchestra or a soloist. Two evenings will take place on the theme "Music and Images," the first with orchestra and the second with organ. On the program, two of the most important movies in cinematic history: *Modern Times* (October 15, 2015), an absolute masterpiece to which director and actor Charlie Chaplin also wrote the music, revised and conducted here by American Timothy Brock, joined by the OSM for the occasion; and *Metropolis* (January 23, 2016), the Fritz Lang classic, accompanied by an improvisation on the organ by Thierry Escaich, composer, organist and improviser enthused by the seventh art.

## 9. *The Rite of Spring conducted by Kent Nagano*

A landmark work of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* is a pillar of musical modernism. Choreographed on numerous occasions since its premiere and used in the Walt Disney film *Fantasia*, the ballet evokes powerful tribal images, sustained by highly rhythmic music with marked but accessible dissonances. The work is divided into two parts: the Adoration of the Earth and the Sacrifice. This concert will also feature the talent of one of the most interesting pianists on the international scene, Daniil Trifonov, in Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 3*, a highly virtuoso work often associated with Martha Argerich. Completing the program will be Debussy's *Jeux*.

## 10. *Closing of Kent Nagano's 10<sup>th</sup> season*

To close this 82<sup>nd</sup> season, Kent Nagano will conduct the OSM musicians and Chorus in Britten's *War Requiem*, with three of our greatest soloists – Catherine Naglestad (soprano), Ian Bostridge (tenor) and Thomas Hampson (baritone) – on May 25, 28 and 29. This is a work both tragic and of great sensitivity, a true masterpiece of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that testifies to the absurdity and horrors of war.

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## *Also this season*

### **2<sup>nd</sup> season of the Grand Orgue Pierre-Béique**

Since its inauguration in May 2014, soloists at the controls of the Grand Orgue Pierre-Béique have made it possible for many music lovers to discover its exceptional possibilities in the framework of original formulas. In addition to the *Metropolis* concert presented as part of "Music and Images," the highlighting of this one-of-a-kind instrument will continue at recitals, preconcert recitals and concerts with orchestra. Throughout the season, top-level performers will be heard, among them the OSM organist emeritus and titular organist at Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, Olivier Latry, in the *Poulenc Organ Concerto* under the direction of Jukka-Pekka Saraste; Canadian organist Ken Cowan in a duo with the Orchestra's principal trumpet, Paul Merkelo; France's Jean Guillou, a dean of the organ performing for the first time at the OSM, in a transcription for solo organ of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*; and Jean-Willy Kunz, the Orchestra's organist in residence. On May 6 and 7 he will also be part of the concert *Anatomy of a Sigh*, which combines music and dance. Audiences will additionally be able to attend a premiere by Québec composer John Rea, complemented by a choreography created by Danièle Desnoyers of the troupe Le Carré des Lombes that brings together six dancers.

### **The OSM welcomes**

*The OSM welcomes* will be hosting for the first time conductor Mariss Jansons with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischer Rundfunk (Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra), and the Budapest Festival Orchestra conducted by Iván Fischer in a concert featuring pianist Marc-André Hamelin.

**Program change:** The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal announces that the Philip Glass Ensemble concert scheduled for Friday and Saturday, April 29 and 30, 2016, has been postponed because of exceptional circumstances. This decision was made jointly with the ensemble. It will be recalled that a Glass cycle was undertaken last season; although the concert programmed for this season is postponed, the collaboration with the artist will continue. OSM customer service will be in touch with subscribers and ticketholders affected by this change. Customer service can be reached at 514 842-9951. The OSM regrets any disappointment this program change may entail for ticketholders and for its clientele.

### **Our musicians in the spotlight**

The talent of the Orchestra's soloists – Andrew Wan (concertmaster), John Zirbel (principal horn), Stéphane Lévesque (principal bassoon), Todd Cope (principal clarinet), Jennifer Swartz (principal harp), Serge Desgagnés (principal percussion) and Paul Merkelo (principal trumpet) – will be featured on various occasions, as will the extraordinary sound of the OSM Chorus, which will perform alone at two concerts, directed with his usual mastery by Andrew Megill: the first devoted to works by Bach, Bernstein, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Tormis and Penderecki, the second dedicated to the splendors of French polyphonic vocal music. This year once more will see a continuation of the series Chamber Music with OSM Musicians in magnificent Bourgie Hall at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

### **And for kids!**

Three young-audience productions will be offered once again this season. **Mathieu Lussier** will lead the Orchestra in a Magic Circle Mime Company production entitled *Orchestra from Planet X* (October 4), which will relate the story of two creatures from outer space bent on influencing “terrestrial” music who touch down at Maison symphonique. **Julien Proulx** will be at the head of the OSM for *Presto Mambo!* (April 24), a Platypus Theatre production and a foray into the vibrant music of South America. Finally, OSM assistant conductor **Dina Gilbert** will conduct the program *The Travels of Babar* (May 15), consisting of Raphael Mostel's music in a brand new orchestration with projections on a giant screen of Jean de Brunhoff's famous drawings.

### **Indispensable partnerships for the OSM**

The contribution of the Orchestra's public partners being indispensable to its operations, the OSM thanks its principal partner, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, as well as the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts de Montréal and Ville de Montréal.

The OSM is proud to be able to count on its loyal partners and wishes to thank Hydro-Québec, official presenter, along with BMO Financial Group, season partner.

We also express our gratitude to Power Corporation of Canada, Air Canada, Manulife, Fondation J. A. DeSève, Fillion Électronique, Investors Group as well as Great-West-London Life and Canada-Vie.

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The OSM finally salutes all its other partners, who at different levels provide essential support for its activities.

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