

MAJOR DONATION FROM THE AZRIELI FOUNDATION FOR THE OSM'S MUSIQUE AUX ENFANTS INITIATIVE

MONTREAL, December 14, 2017 – The La musique aux enfants program has received a major donation from the Azrieli Foundation. Conceived by Kent Nagano, this initiative, developed in partnership with the Université de Montréal and the Commission scolaire de la Pointe-de-l'Île (CSPI), introduces preschool and kindergarten children in the Montréal-Nord borough to music. This donation will make it possible for a second wave of children to benefit from high-level musical learning as part of their education.

Dr. Sharon Azrieli, Board Member of the Azrieli Foundation, explains why the Foundation has chosen to support the program. “Two pillars of the Foundation are education and the arts, and *La Musique aux enfants* so beautifully blends them together. We at the foundation uphold my late father’s belief that music improves the brain’s capacity for learning and are excited to collaborate with Maestro Nagano on this project.”

“There is no greater gift for a child than to have the opportunity to learn classical music. Not only does it immerse them in a world of beauty but most importantly, learning classical music supports the overall development of the child. I am profoundly grateful to the Azrieli Foundation for offering this gift of music to the children of Montréal-Nord,” said Kent Nagano, music director of the OSM and originator of the project.

“This innovative project represents Montréal at its best, an exemplary collaboration between the cultural, education and research communities and the support of a champion of philanthropy,” said Guy Breton, rector of the Université de Montréal. “We look forward to continuing this inspiring project, which involves the collaboration of our faculties of music, educational sciences and medicine.”

La musique aux enfants music education initiative was envisaged by Maestro Kent Nagano and set up by the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal along with numerous partners. It aims to introduce preschool children to intensive music learning for two years to support them in their overall development and thereby contribute to their academic success over the long term. Its mission is also to promote music education for children in Québec and elsewhere, while contributing to the advancement of knowledge in early-childhood music education.

The project has been running for a year in the École Saint-Rémi Annexe of the Commission scolaire de la Pointe-de-l'Île (CSPI) in the borough of Montréal Nord.



“The Commission scolaire de la Pointe-de-l’Île is pleased that the *La musique aux enfants* educational and cultural initiative has received major financial support from the Azrieli Foundation. This will allow the program to be extended another two years and to reach even more children in the Montréal-Nord sector. On behalf of these youngsters, their parents, the team from École Saint-Rémi and the CSPI school commissioners, we extend a huge thank you to the Azrieli Foundation!” said **Miville Boudreault**, chairman of the CSPI.

The Orchestre symphonique de Montréal

Since its founding in 1934, the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal has distinguished itself as a leader in the orchestral life of Canada and Québec. A cultural ambassador of the highest order, the Orchestra has earned an enviable reputation internationally through the quality of its many recordings and tours. The OSM carries on that rich tradition under the leadership of its Music Director, Kent Nagano, while featuring innovative programming aimed at updating the orchestral repertoire and deepening the Orchestra’s connection with the community. Over the years, the OSM has performed on more than 40 tours and some 30 national and international excursions. The OSM has made over 100 recordings for Decca, EMI, Philips, CBC Records, Analekta, ECM and Sony, as well as on its own label, which have earned it some 50 national and international awards.

The Azrieli Foundation

For 25 years, the Azrieli Foundation has provided funding to institutions as well as operated programs on the ground. The Foundation supports a host of initiatives in the spheres of music and the arts, scientific and medical research, higher education, Holocaust education, architecture, youth empowerment and school perseverance, and quality of life initiatives for people with developmental disabilities. www.azrielifoundation.org

To donate or for further information: lamusiqueauxenfants.org

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