



## **THE OSM EXPRESSES ITS GREAT SADNESS AT THE PASSING OF MADAME JACQUELINE DESMARAIS, AS WELL AS ITS PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO ONE OF THE GREAT MUSIC PHILANTHROPISTS**

Montreal, March 3, 2018 - With deep regret and sadness we learned of the death of madame Jacqueline Desmarais. With her passing, the artistic milieu loses one of its most fervent supporters. Our thoughts are with her family and close friends, to whom we convey our deepest condolences.

Madame Desmarais was a member of the Board of Directors of the OSM and has long been intimately tied to the history and development of the Orchestra. In addition to her many other contributions to the development and renown of the OSM, Madame Jacqueline Desmarais generously supported the organization in its recent acquisition of an organ of exceptional international calibre, as well as its installation in the Maison symphonique. It was her wish that its name should immortalize the memory of her dear friend, monsieur Pierre Béique, founder and first General Director of the OSM, from 1939 to 1970, as well as his unequalled contribution to the Orchestra's mission of excellence. The Grand Orgue Pierre Béique, inaugurated on May 28, 2014, was designed and built by Casavant Frères for the OSM, where it resonates to this day, attracting countless music lovers. The OSM's next concert on Tuesday, March 6, at 8PM at the Maison symphonique, will open with a performance by OSM Organist in residence Jean-Willy Kunz, played in madame Desmarais' memory.

Lucien Bouchard, Chairman of the Board of the OSM, offered a heartfelt homage to madame Desmarais, his personal friend: "Today we lose a great figure in the music world, who offered her sustained support not only to operatic and musical institutions but also to a myriad of young talented artists in the field of music and singing. We will cherish her memory in our hearts, recalling constantly in our thoughts a warm and generous woman with such a great love for life and for people."

Music director Kent Nagano was also moved to address a final homage to madame Jacqueline Desmarais in recognition of her passing. Kent Nagano and OSM will dedicate to her memory one of the performances of Verdi's Requiem during the week of March 19. The exact date of the concert will be announced in the following days.

Madame Jacqueline Desmarais will remain in our hearts a shining example of philanthropy in the arts and music, and above all a profound admirer of great artists.