

## THE OSM RETURNS TO NORTHERN QUEBEC VISITING THREE NATIONS IN SIX CONCERTS

Montreal, September 20, 2018 — The OSM and Kent Nagano just returned today from an eleven-day tour of Northern Quebec. Ten years after travelling to Nunavik to perform Stravinsky's *A Soldier's Tale* in Inuktitut, the Orchestra and its conductor headed northward once again to perform **CHAAKAPESH, THE TRICKSTER'S QUEST** for audiences in six different Indigenous communities. Capacity audiences filled each concert venue, children and adults alike, while rewarding educational and community activities added to these inspiring and inspired encounters. The OSM's excursion to Nunavik and Quebec's Far North was filled with special moments of exchange and sharing.



The OSM, under the direction of Kent Nagano, at Oujé-Bougoumou

Marking a successful collaboration between Indigenous artists and the OSM, **CHAAKAPESH, THE TRICKSTER'S QUEST**, a collaboration between composer Matthew Ricketts and author Tomson Highway, met with hearty applause at its world premiere at the Maison symphonique on the OSM's 85th season opening concerts in Montreal on September 6 and 8. The OSM and **Kent Nagano** then took the work on tour to **KUJJUAQ, SALLUIT, KUJJUARAPIK, OIJÉ-BOUGOUMOU, MASHTUIATSH**, and **UASHAT MAK MANI-UTENAM** from September 9 to 19, performing the tragicomic chamber opera for audiences of three Indigenous nations: Inuit, Innu, and Cree.



Excursion boat in Salluit

With the creative contributions of local artists from each community visited, the concert was given in each of the languages spoken in the areas visited. **Florent Vollant**, **Akinisie Sivuvarapik**, and **Ernest Webb** took turns narrating the opera—in Innu, Inuktitut, and Cree respectively—while **Geoffroy Salvas** (baritone) and **Owen McCausland** (tenor) performed their roles in Cree. The opera’s libretto was written by **Tomson Highway** with an orchestral score by **Matthew Ricketts**, and the production was staged by **Charles Dauphinais**. **CHAAKAPESH, THE TRICKSTER’S QUEST** is inspired by an Innu legend that teaches us that we are here on Earth to laugh and to live in harmony with our planet.

## MORE THAN A CONCERT TOUR: ELEVEN DAYS OF SHARING AND DIALOGUE



Eric conducts the string quartet of the OSM in Salluit.

Building on the idea of music as a medium to communicate between cultures, languages and borders, this emotion-filled tour was more than just a series of performances for OSM musicians and Maestro **Kent Nagano**. It was the opportunity to meet and to share, to listen and to learn. The musicians reached out and were warmly welcomed by the public, local creators, numerous students and community leaders. One after the other, unforgettable moments unfolded. Here is a summary of this wonder-filled northern journey...

For the very first performance of **CHAAKAPESH, THE TRICKSTER'S QUEST** in **KUUJJUAQ** on September 10, the community's newly built church was filled to absolute capacity with over 400 audience members of all ages. Earlier in the day, OSM musicians and conductor met with 300 enthusiastic students as they took part in educational activities, followed by a group activity with some 30 teenagers. When **André Moisan** improvised on clarinet while **Maestro Nagano** recounted a Japanese fable illustrating the power of storytelling through music, one could literally hear a pin drop! The tour continued to **SALLUIT** on September 12, and it was with the utmost enthusiasm and with open arms that schoolchildren welcomed the musicians to their community. Each child had crafted a conductor's baton with their teacher, and one barely 5-year-old youngster got up on stage to conduct the musicians! As was the case for all the communities visited on the tour, conductor and musicians lent themselves to the obligatory autographs and selfies after the concert!



André Moisan, Bass Clarinet of the OSM.

The concert on September 14 in **KUUJJUARAPIK** – a unique community where Cree and Innu cultures meet – was also greeted by a full house in the community's magnificent, newly built cultural centre, Katitavik. Along with the Orchestra, audiences were able to enjoy the artistry of two guest performers: Inuit throat-singer **Linda Kowcharlie** and Cree fiddler **Eric Shashamash**. In **OUIÉ-BOUGOUMOU** on September 17, a violent storm caused a total blackout in the region. Luckily, the entire community pitched in with generators and flashlights! The concert, which featured young local cellist **Kelly Cooper** and narrator **Ernest Webb**, took place in semi-darkness, making the performance even more special and magical because of the unexpected intimacy created by the power outage... In **MASHTEUIATSH** on September 18, **Florent Vollant** served as the narrator in Innu, repeating the experience the next day in his own community of **UASHAT MAK MANI-UTENAM**, where the warmest of welcomes awaited him.



Maestro meets the public after a concert.

## PHOTOS VIDEO CAPSULES

### **THE OSM WISHES TO THANK ITS PARTNERS**

This project is one of more than 200 outstanding projects supported by the New Chapter programme created by the Canada Council for the Arts. With this investment of \$35 million, the Canada Council supports artistic creation and exchange at the very core of our lives and across Canada. For their invaluable support of the Nord-du-Québec tour, the OSM also wishes to express deep gratitude to its project partners ArcelorMittal Mining Canada GP, National Bank Financial/F. Fortier Wealth Management Group, Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, BBA, Raglan Mine, Glencore, the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau, and Pivallianiq.

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The OSM is proud to be able to rely on its loyal sponsors, and wishes to gratefully acknowledge its presenting sponsor, Hydro-Quebec, as well as its season partner, BMO Financial Group.

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