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## **Opera Atelier's Creative Team to Create New Production of Rossini's *Ricciardo e Zoraide* for Rossini Opera Festival** **- Production will open 2018 Festival in Pesaro, Italy -**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Toronto, ON (Oct. 3, 2017) – Opera Atelier is delighted to announce that our company's entire creative team has been invited to create a new production of Rossini's *Ricciardo e Zoraide* to open the **Rossini Opera Festival's** 2018 season in Pesaro, Italy. This new production will take place in Pesaro's Adriatic Arena **August, 11, 14, 17 and 20, 2017** and will be directed and choreographed by Opera Atelier's Co-Artistic Directors **Marshall Pynkoski** and **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg** with set designs by **Gerard Gauci**, costume designs by **Michael Gianfrancesco**, and lighting by **Michelle Ramsay**.

The Rossini Opera Festival (ROF) takes place in August of each year on Italy's Adriatic Coast, in Rossini's birthplace Pesaro, and is the leading Rossini festival in the world. Each year, the Festival attracts thousands of audience members from Europe, North America and Asia, and features the world's finest Rossini singers and conductors. Having seen Opera Atelier's productions of *Lucio Silla* at La Scala (2015) and *Médée* at Versailles (2017), ROF General Director **Ernesto Palacio** invited Opera Atelier's creative team to create the lead production to open the 2018 Festival commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rossini's death.

The star-studded cast includes tenor **Juan Diego Flórez** as *Ricciardo*, tenor **Sergey Romanovsky** as *Agorante* and soprano **Pretty Yende** as *Zoraide*. The production will be conducted by **Giacomo Sagripanti**, who was recently named Young Conductor of the Year at the BBC 2016 International Opera Awards, and will also include a corps de ballet drawn from La Scala.

"The support Opera Atelier has received from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council to tour to the Royal Opera House at Versailles provided us with the opportunity for our work to be showcased on the international stage," says Opera Atelier Co-Artistic Director Marshall Pynkoski. "This most recent invitation for Opera Atelier's entire creative team to make their ROF debuts underlines how important international touring can be in the development of Canadian artists and arts organizations."

*Opera Atelier is North America's premier period opera/ballet company, producing the opera, ballet and drama of the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. While drawing upon the aesthetics and ideals of the period, Opera Atelier goes beyond "reconstruction" and infuses each production with an inventive theatricality that resonates with modern audiences. Led by founding artistic directors Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg since 1985, Opera Atelier has garnered acclaim for its performances at home as well as in the United States, Europe and Asia. Opera Atelier is committed to the development of young Canadian artists and offers innovative education programs for youth.*

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**Images are available for download at [operaatelier.com](http://operaatelier.com)**