

# OPERA | 18 ATELIER | 19

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## **French Baroque double bill opens Opera Atelier's 2018-2019 Season**

- *Actéon & Pygmalion* and New Canadian Commission will tour to Harris Theater and Palace of Versailles -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Sept 26, 2018): Toronto, ON – Opera Atelier's Toronto season opens with a French Baroque double bill of Charpentier's *Actéon* paired with Rameau's *Pygmalion* (Oct. 25 – Nov. 3, 2018 at the Elgin Theatre). The double bill will then embark on an international tour to the Harris Theater for Music and Dance/Chicago, and The Royal Opera House/Versailles, France.

*Actéon & Pygmalion* – two iconic Greek myths from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* – are transformed into riveting operatic masterpieces in the hands of two of the greatest composers in French music history. The evening opens with **Charpentier's *Actéon***, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century psychological thriller in which the young hunter of the title role is turned into a stag by Diana, goddess of the hunt. Actéon's magical transformation takes place on stage - a tour de force for tenor **Colin Ainsworth** in the title role. Actéon is then hunted and destroyed by his fellow hunters and hounds. Following the intermission, Opera Atelier presents *Pygmalion*, Rameau's most famous Rococo masterpiece, in which Colin Ainsworth again interprets the title role. *Pygmalion* tells the story of a beautiful statue transformed into a living, breathing woman by the power of Love and Desire.

*Pygmalion* opens with Opera Atelier's first Canadian commission for solo Baroque violin and contemporary dancing, entitled *Inception*. This creation has been conceived by OA co-artistic directors as a theatrical intervention that leads into and merges with Rameau's famous overture. Performed by composer/violinist **Edwin Huizinga** and choreographer/Artist of Atelier Ballet, **Tyler Gledhill**, *Inception* is a *pas de deux* for instrumentalist and dancer, transforming the performance space as part of the evening's theme of metamorphosis. Gledhill depicts Eros, who existed before the universe came into being. Eros proceeds to create the world in which the opera *Pygmalion* will take place. Eros, along with his counterpart Love, appears throughout the opera as a constant presence and catalyst to a story driven by Love and Desire.

Following the Toronto performances, the program will tour to Chicago where Opera Atelier will make its Chicago debut as part of the 2018-2019 season at the **Harris Theater for Music and Dance**. The production then moves to the Royal Opera House at the **Palace of Versailles**, marking Opera Atelier's fifth appearance since the company's debut there in 2012. While in Versailles, Opera Atelier will present an expanded version of "Harmonia Sacra", the staged and choreographed performance that debuted to great acclaim in the Royal Chapel in 2017. This new version, entitled "The Angel Speaks", features an original composition by **Edwin Huizinga**, a blending of Baroque and contemporary choreography by **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg** and **Tyler Gledhill**, singers **Mireille Asselin** and **Jesse Blumberg**, **Artists of Atelier Ballet**, and members of **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra**.

Artists for Opera Atelier's 2018-2019 season include **Colin Ainsworth** – Opera Atelier's first Artist-in-Residence – soprano **Mireille Asselin** (Diana & Amour), mezzo-soprano **Allyson McHardy** (Juno & Céphise), baritone **Jesse Blumberg**, tenor **Christopher Enns**, soprano **Meghan Lindsay**, and mezzo-sopranos **Cynthia Smithers** and **Anna Sharpe**. *Actéon & Pygmalion* will be directed by **Marshall Pynkoski** and choreographed by **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg**, with set design by **Gerard Gauci**, lighting design by **Michelle Ramsay** and costume designs by **Gerard Gauci** and **Michael Gianfrancesco**. The season will feature the full corps of **Artists of Atelier Ballet**, and our longtime partners **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra** (**Elisa Citterio**, Music Director) under the baton of **David Fallis**. Opera Atelier will collaborate with the **Chorus of the University of Toronto Schola Cantorum**, along with members of the **Choir of the Theatre of Early Music**, under the direction of Lead Vocal Consultant and Chorus Master **Daniel Taylor**. Performed in French with English Surtitles.

The season continues in spring 2019 with Mozart's *Idomeneo* (Apr. 4 – 13, 2019 at the Ed Mirvish Theatre), starring Canadian soprano **Measha Brueggergosman** in her Dora Award-winning performance as Elettra.

Subscriptions to Opera Atelier's two-opera season start at \$99 and are on sale now by calling **416-703-3767 x222** or visiting [operaatelier.com/subscriptions](http://operaatelier.com/subscriptions). Single tickets are on sale now via Ticketmaster.ca or **1-855-622-ARTS(2787)**. For more information visit Opera Atelier's website: [www.operaatelier.com](http://www.operaatelier.com).

*This event has been financially assisted by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, administered by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund Corporation.*

### **2018-2019 Major Sponsors**

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*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, as well as \$15 tickets for ages 15 to 30.*

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