

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 24, 2019

**Don Giovanni Launches Opera Atelier's 2019/20 Season**

***The world's most incorrigible lover returns to the stage in this glittering production of Mozart's comedic masterpiece featuring acclaimed bass-baritone Douglas Williams***

**Toronto, ON** — Opera Atelier's 2019/20 Season opens with their ground-breaking period production of ***Don Giovanni*** from **October 31–November 9, 2019** at the **Ed Mirvish Theatre**. This is the first time Opera Atelier's acclaimed production has been remounted for Toronto audiences since its 2011 premiere. *Don Giovanni* features **Douglas Williams** as Don Giovanni, **Colin Ainsworth** as Don Ottavio, **Gustav Andreassen** as the Commendatore, **Mireille Asselin** as Zerlina, **Stephen Hegedus** as Leporello, **Carla Huhtanen** as Donna Elvira, **Olivier Laquerre** as Masetto, and **Meghan Lindsay** as Donna Anna.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to revisit our production of this spectacular opera, which has achieved such success in North America, Japan, and South Korea," enthuses Opera Atelier Founding Co-Artistic Director **Marshall Pynkoski C.M.** "Mozart wrote *Don Giovanni* as a *commedia dell'arte* inspired comedy about a young man who is both irresponsible and amoral. This interpretation follows Mozart's lead, who called *Don Giovanni* an 'opera buffa,' and this is what sets our production apart."

Mozart's outrageous comedy — with a libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte — tells the tale of an incorrigible young playboy who blazes a path to his own destruction in a single day. Based on the story of Don Juan, *Don Giovanni* follows an irresistible youth who is loved by women almost as universally as he loves them. His luck begins to turn at the beginning of the story, and the audience soon sees that even he cannot escape the consequences of his flouting of conventional morality. Featuring soaring music, bloody fights, and mistaken identity, *Don Giovanni* stands as one of Mozart's greatest comic masterpieces.

American bass-baritone Williams, who created a sensation as the Figaro in Opera Atelier's 2017 production of *The Marriage of Figaro*, will make his debut in the title role. Praised for his stage presence and dramatic range, Williams has worked with celebrated directors and conductors, including Mark Morris (*Acis and Galatea* for Lincoln Center), James Darrah (*Agrippina* for Opera Omaha; *The Other Euridice* for Bay Chamber Concerts), Barbara Hannigan (*The Rake's Progress* with Munich Philharmonic), and Andrew Manze (Mozart Mass in C Minor with Mozarteum Salzburg at the Salzburg Festival).

This production restores all of the dances which Mozart included in his original production — which premiered in Prague in 1787 — and makes extensive use of the full roster of Artists of Atelier Ballet, choreographed by **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg C.M.** Of particular note, Artist of Atelier Ballet **Kevin Law** will be celebrating his 10th anniversary with Opera Atelier.

"Mozart loved dancing, and nowhere is this more in evidence than in the brilliantly integrated ballroom scene of *Don Giovanni*, in which a minuet, a contredanse, and a waltz are danced simultaneously, and over which the ensemble of principals plot and converse," adds Opera Atelier Co-Artistic Director and Choreographer Lajeunesse Zingg. "These dances, along with the extended Peasant dance in Act 1 are choreographed using steps current in the theatre of Mozart's day."

The Toronto Star called Opera Atelier's 2011 production "a feast for lovers of great music, great theatre, and great entertainment." Opera Atelier's award-winning creative team includes set design by **Gerard Gauci**, costumes by the late **Martha Mann Southgate**, lighting design by **Michelle Ramsay**, and fight direction by **Jennifer Parr**.

Mozart's remarkable score will be played on period instruments by the Grammy-nominated **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra (Elisa Citterio, Music Director)** under the baton of conductor **David Fallis**. The production will be

directed by Pynkoski and choreographed by Lajeunesse Zingg 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**.

Pynkoski has collaborated with many of the world's finest early music artists and his productions of opera and ballet have been featured in major opera houses and festivals throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. He is the recipient of numerous awards including the Toronto Arts Award, the Opera Canada Ruby Award for outstanding contribution to opera in Canada, and the TIME Magazine award for Classical music. He has been named Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Government of France and was recently awarded the Order of Canada.

Lajeunesse Zingg's choreography for Opera Atelier productions has been featured in major theatres and festivals internationally and she has collaborated with artists from the Dutch National Ballet, the Scapino Ballet, and dancers from La Scala among others. She received her training in London, Copenhagen, and Paris. Lajeunesse Zingg has received a multitude of awards, including the prestigious Toronto Arts Award, the Opera Canada Ruby Award for outstanding achievement in the field of opera in Canada, and was named by TIME Magazine as one of Canada's most influential artists in the field of Classical music. She was recently awarded the Order of Canada for her contribution to ballet and opera in Canada.

Tickets and information for *Don Giovanni* at: [OperaAtelier.com](http://OperaAtelier.com)

### **About Opera Atelier**

Established in 1985, Opera Atelier is Canada's premier period opera/ballet company, specializing in productions of opera, ballet, and drama from the 17th, 18th and 19th 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. These productions feature soloists of international acclaim, period ballet, original instruments, historically-informed set and costume design, and an imaginative energy that sets Opera Atelier apart.

Opera Atelier has one of the busiest international touring schedules of any theatre company in Canada. Opera Atelier tours on a regular basis to the Royal Opera House in Versailles. The company has also performed at the BBC Proms, the Glimmerglass Festival in New York, the Salzburg Festival, the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, and at La Scala in Milan. Opera Atelier has collaborated with some of early music's most distinguished artists including Andrew Parrott, Trevor Pinnock, Hervé Niquet, Christopher Hogwood and Marc Minkowski among others.

Opera Atelier creates historically-informed productions that speaks to the here and now; finding fresh relevance for modern audiences. Through impassioned outreach and audience development, Opera Atelier aims to secure a future by ensuring opera and ballet has a place in the hearts and lives of the upcoming generation.

### **LISTING INFORMATION**

#### **Opera Atelier presents *Don Giovanni***

**Dates:** October 31– November 9, 2019

**Ticket Prices:** \$39–\$194 plus taxes and fees

**Venue:** Ed Mirvish Theatre  
244 Victoria St,  
Toronto, Ontario

**Tickets and Info:** [OperaAtelier.com](http://OperaAtelier.com)

-30-

---

**For further media information, contact**  
Ella Batten | T. 647.484.9200 Ext. 515 | C. 647.231.0502

[ebatten@mpmgarts.com](mailto:ebatten@mpmgarts.com)

**MURRAY PATERSON**

MARKETING GROUP