

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Opera Atelier Co-Artistic Directors to Stage and Choreograph Historic Performance Celebrating 250th Anniversary of Royal Opera House at Versailles**

***Marshall Pynkoski, C.M. and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg, C.M. collaborate with Versailles to bring André Grétry's opera 'Richard Coeur-de-lion' to life***

**Toronto, ON** – Opera Atelier is honoured to announce Founding Co-Artistic Directors **Marshall Pynkoski C.M.** and **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg C.M.** will stage and choreograph Grétry's opera ***Richard Coeur-de-lion***, celebrating the 250th anniversary of the **Royal Opera House** at Versailles from **October 10 to 13, 2019** at **Château de Versailles**. This extraordinary event marks the ultimate recognition of Pynkoski and Lajeunesse Zingg's interpretation of French Baroque repertoire — selected as the only non-French artists involved in this milestone anniversary of the most prestigious opera house in France.

“Staging this production of *Richard Coeur-de-lion* is one of the most satisfying opportunities of our careers,” says Pynkoski. “Our partnership with the Royal Opera House has played a key role in defining Opera Atelier's distinct aesthetic and the invitation to stage and choreograph the first self-produced opera by the Royal Opera House since its official reopening in 2009 is a great honour.”

The invitation to Pynkoski and Zingg came from **Laurent Brunner**, celebrated Artistic Director of Château de Versailles Spectacles and the Royal Opera House. Brunner has been Artistic Director of Château de Versailles Spectacles since 2007, responsible for all musical and special events that take place at the Château and in the gardens. Brunner has spent his entire career producing live events and specializes in French baroque music.

“*Richard Coeur-de-lion* had its premiere in a world on the brink of social revolution and the aesthetics of that world are the driving force behind our vision for the production,” adds Lajeunesse Zingg. “We have immersed ourselves in the original intentions of the composer, librettist, choreographer, and designers of *Richard Coeur-de-lion*, but only as a take-off point in order to challenge ourselves in new ways as artists in the 21st century.”

*Richard Coeur-de-lion* has been associated with the French royal family since its first performance in 1784. “O Richard, O mon Roi,” the opera's signature aria, was last heard in the Royal Opera House sung by the Royal Bodyguard during a banquet just five days before the attempted flight of Marie Antoinette, Louis XVI, and their family from Versailles. The aria was subsequently banned by the revolutionary government. Recognized as Grétry's masterpiece and one of the foremost French *opéras comiques*, the work is based on the legend of King Richard I of England's imprisonment and rescue from Austria.

The creative team includes some of the finest designers, instrumentalists, and singers in France, including Conductor **Hervé Niquet**, director of Le Concert Spirituel. The opera will be designed by Set Designer **Antoine Fontaine** (legendary production designer of Sofia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette*, Roland Joffé's *Vatel* and Patrice Chéreau's *La Reine Margot*), Lighting Designer **Hervé Gary** (Opéra Garnier, Opéra Bastille, La Scala, Jean Paul Gaultier), and Costume Designer **Camille Assaf**. Pynkoski and Lajeunesse Zingg have previously collaborated with members of the creative team in Toronto with Opera Atelier, at the Salzburg Festival, at Musikfest Bremen, and at La Scala.

Opera Atelier's staging of French opera and ballet for the Royal Opera House has earned the company international accolades, and this production of *Richard Coeur-de-lion* will mark the sixth engagement of Opera Atelier's Co-Artistic Directors' by Château de Versailles Spectacles.

Pynkoski has collaborated with many of the finest artists in the world of early music 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 has performed and choreographed for more than three decades. Her choreography for OA 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.

**Thanks to the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris for their generous support of Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg, assisting them in realizing their vision for the staging and choreography.**

Tickets and concert information for *Richard Coeur-de-lion* at: [en.chateauversailles-spectacles.fr](http://en.chateauversailles-spectacles.fr)

### **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. OA 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**

**Château de Versailles Spectacles presents  
*Richard Coeur-de-lion***

**Dates:**

October 10–13, 2019

**Ticket Prices:**

38€–140€

**Venue:**

Royal Opera House (Opéra Royal de Versailles)  
Château de Versailles, Place d'Armes, Versailles, France

**Tickets and Info:**

[en.chateauversailles-spectacles.fr](http://en.chateauversailles-spectacles.fr)

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