

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 31, 2019

OPERA 19 ATELIER 20

Opera Atelier Announces 2019/20 Season of Sinners and Saints

Company Unveils 34th Season Featuring Daring Juxtaposition of Mozart's Don Giovanni and Handel's The Resurrection

Toronto, ON — Opera Atelier is thrilled to announce a dramatic 2019/20 season with two wildly varying masterworks in two distinctly different venues: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Don Giovanni* from **October 31–November 9, 2019**, in the **Ed Mirvish Theatre**, and George Frideric Handel's *The Resurrection* from **April 11–19, 2020**, at **Koerner Hall**. Both productions include the full corps of **Artists of Atelier Ballet** with choreography by Founding Co-Artistic Director **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg**, and the renowned **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra** led by **Elisa Citterio** under the baton of Opera Atelier Music Director **David Fallis**.

Opera Atelier's award-winning production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* features American bass-baritone **Douglas Williams** who will make his role debut as the Don, alongside a stellar cast of Opera Atelier's favourite singers — who act much like a repertory theatre company. Opera Atelier is delighted to welcome back current Artist in Residence, Canadian tenor **Colin Ainsworth**, as Don Ottavio. The production includes **Meghan Lindsay** as Donna Anna, **Stephen Hegedus** as Leporello, **Carla Huhtanen** in her role debut as Donna Elvira, **Mireille Asselin** as Zerlina, **Olivier Laquerre** as Masetto, and **Gustav Andreassen** as Commendatore. The production also features **Martha Mann's** award-winning costume designs, **Gerard Gauci's** extravagant sets, and lighting design by **Michelle Ramsay**. The season continues the company's important relationship with Mirvish Productions by taking place in the beautiful Ed Mirvish Theatre.

"Our audience has made it clear they are longing for us to return to the Mozart production, which had its premiere in 2011," says Opera Atelier Founding Co-Artistic Director **Marshall Pynkoski**. "Mozart himself referred to *Don Giovanni* as an *opera buffa* and it is in this spirit that we present our commedia dell'arte inspired production."

Lajeunesse Zingg adds: "Douglas displayed such an astonishing facility both for comedy in Opera Atelier's *The Marriage of Figaro* in 2017 and sexually charged danger in Monteverdi's *The Return of Ulysses* in 2018 — we knew we had to revisit this production for him."

Mozart's outrageous comedy 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 a skirt-chasing youth who is loved by women almost as universally as *he loves them*. His luck begins to turn at the start of the story, and the audiences soon see that even he cannot escape the consequences of his actions. Featuring an astonishingly inventive score, bloody duels, and mistaken identities, *Don Giovanni* stands as one of Mozart's greatest comic masterpieces.

The season continues with Handel's first operatic masterpiece, *The Resurrection*, which opens in the superb acoustics of Koerner Hall just in time for the Easter season. Opera Atelier first staged this work for the Handel Festival in Halle, Germany, in 1995; the 2020 remount will fulfill the company's dream to create a fully staged production in Toronto. The all-Canadian cast features Huhtanen as Gabriel, Lindsay as Mary Magdalene, **Isaiah Bell** as Saint John, Hegedus as Satan, and **Allyson McHardy** as Cleophas. The production includes sets by Gauci and lighting design by Ramsay.

The action begins with the angel Gabriel appearing at the gates of hell following Christ's death. Handel and his librettist manage to turn this classic Easter story into an operatic pot boiler, including the classic baroque messenger scene in which Mary Magdalene races onto the stage to describe in thrilling detail her encounter with the risen Christ in the garden.

Handel's *The Resurrection* premiered in Rome in 1708. Due to the Lenten season, all theatres were closed but Handel brilliantly circumvented these restrictions by producing the work in the Palazzo Ruspoli. His original production was an opera in everything but name, and included a lavish setting of clouds, painted baroque backdrops, and palm trees. Given that the work was never meant to be played in a proscenium theatre, Opera Atelier has selected Koerner Hall as the closest facsimile to the grandeur of a Roman baroque ballroom.

.../more

Subscriptions for Opera Atelier's 2019/20 season are on sale now at OperaAtelier.com or by calling: 416-703-3767 ext. 222.

Season Presenting Sponsor: BMO Financial Group
Season Underwriter: El Mocambo Productions

Opera Atelier gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of The Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council.

About Opera Atelier (OperaAtelier.com)

Established in 1985, Opera Atelier is Canada's premier period opera/ballet company, specializing in producing opera, ballet, and drama from the 17th and 18th 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, elaborate stage decor, intricate costumes, and an imaginative energy that sets Opera Atelier apart. Founding Artistic Directors Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg were both recently awarded the Order of Canada for their contributions to opera and ballet.

Opera Atelier has been acclaimed throughout Canada, and tours on a regular basis to the Royal Opera House in Versailles. The company has also performed at the Glimmerglass Festival in New York, Salzburg Festival, the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, and La Scala in Milan. Opera Atelier has collaborated with some of early music's most distinguished artists including Andrew Parrott, Trevor Pinnock, Hervé Niquet, Marc Minkowski and many others.

Through historically informed performance practice, Opera Atelier allows audiences to experience the continuum of musical form; hearing and seeing great works in the ways these works might have first resonated. In inspired programming, Opera Atelier creates art that speaks to the here and now; finding fresh relevance for society in evergreen creations. Through impassioned outreach and audience development, Opera Atelier aims to secure a future by ensuring opera has a place in the hearts and lives of the upcoming generation.

LISTING INFORMATION

Opera Atelier's 2019/20 Season

Programs:

Don Giovanni and The Resurrection

Dates:

October 31–November 9, 2019 and April 11–19, 2020

Venue:

Ed Mirvish Theatre
244 Victoria Street
Toronto, ON M5B 1V8
– and –
Koerner Hall
TELUS Centre for Performance and Learning
The Royal Conservatory
273 Bloor Street W
Toronto, ON M5S 1V6

Ticket Prices:

Subscriptions from \$99.
Individual tickets from \$39 (some fees may apply).

Tickets and Info:

OperaAtelier.com

-30-

For further media information, contact
Ella Batten | T. 647.484.9200 Ext. 515 | C. 647.231.0502
ebatten@mpmgarts.com

MURRAY PATERSON
MARKETING GROUP