

# OPERA 21 *Wings of* ATELIER 22 *Desire*

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## **Opera Atelier Announces 2021/22 Season: *Wings of Desire***

***36th Season includes Fall Film Premiere of Angel, A Return to France, and Measha Brueggergosman's Extension as Artist in Residence and Appointment as Artist Advisor to the Board of Directors***

**Toronto, ON** — Opera Atelier is delighted to announce a thrilling 2021 Fall Season with the film premiere of *Angel* - fully-staged and filmed at St. Lawrence Hall, in strict compliance with provincial health and safety regulations - **streaming Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 7pm ET (available until November 12, 2021)**. *Angel* marks the culmination of composer **Edwin Huizinga's** commission for the company; the first iteration of the work took place in the Royal Chapel in Versailles in 2017 where Opera Atelier was invited to participate in the official Canada 150 celebrations in France.

The 70-minute film will include stage direction by Founding Co-Artistic Director **Marshall Pynkoski C.M.**, the full corps of **Artists of Atelier Ballet** with choreography by Founding Co-Artistic Director **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg C.M.**, and additional solo contemporary choreography by Artist of Atelier Ballet **Tyler Gledhill**, and featuring the renowned **Tafelmusik - Elisa Citterio, Music Director** - under the baton of Opera Atelier Music Director **David Fallis**.

The production of *Angel* will include Opera Atelier's first collaboration with **The Nathaniel Dett Choral** - Canada's premiere choral group specializing in Afrocentric music of all styles - under the direction of **Brainerd Blyden-Taylor**, and reunites with Canadian filmmaker **Marcel Canzona** as the film director, director of photography, and editor.

"Huizinga's stunning commission has enjoyed enormous success since its premiere in 2017 in France, expanding on a yearly basis with additional performances in Toronto, at Chicago's Harris Theater for Music and Dance, and in Versailles," says Pynkoski. "At long last, we are able to realize this project in its entirety with a stellar international roster of artists, led by Opera Atelier's Artist In Residence - soprano Measha Brueggergosman, the Artists of Atelier Ballet, and Tafelmusik. The film premiere will include excerpts from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, interwoven with Rainer Maria Rilke's mystic poetry in a new translation commissioned by Opera Atelier from American Playwright Grace Andreacchi."

Alongside soprano **Measha Brueggergosman**, *Angel* will feature tenor **Colin Ainsworth**, soprano **Mireille Asselin**, baritone **Jesse Blumberg**, soprano **Meghan Lindsay**, baritone **John Tibbetts** (Opera Atelier debut), and bass-baritone **Douglas Williams**.

The production will showcase new sets and art direction from Opera Atelier Resident Set Designer **Gerard Gauci**, and costumes by **Michael Gianfrancesco** and **Michael Legouffe**.

In addition to Huizinga's original compositions for *Angel*, the film will include music by Jean-Philippe Rameau, William Boyce, Matthew Locke, as well as "Summer 1" and "Winter 1" from **Max Richter's *Recomposed by Max Richter: Vivaldi - The Four Seasons***. ("Summer 1" and "Winter 1" are published by Mute Song Ltd. and Rough Trade Publishing, and appear by arrangement with Bank Robber Music).

*Angel* will mark the first time Richter's recomposition will be played on period instruments.

"*Angel* will be a lasting testament to the uncrushable spirit of creativity that has fueled artists and their imaginations throughout history," says Opera Atelier Co-Founding Artistic Director Lajeunesse Zingg.

Opera Atelier will return to in-theatre performances for the spring 2022 season. Full production details, casting, dates and ticketing information will be announced in January 2022.

Due to popular demand, Opera Atelier announces a two-week return of the Canadian Film Premiere **Handel's *The Resurrection* - streaming from Thursday July 29, 2021 through August 12, 2021.** Hailed as "resplendent art in the face of adversity" by Opera Canada Magazine, the film features an all-star cast including soprano **Carla Huhtanen**, soprano **Meghan Lindsay**, mezzo-soprano **Allyson McHardy**, tenor **Colin Ainsworth**, and bass-baritone **Douglas Williams**.

This re-release will also feature a Standard Audio Description version of the film prepared by Superior Description Services. The Standard Audio Description version of Handel's *The Resurrection* will provide an immersive virtual experience, and offers an accessibility service for Blind and Partially Sighted people to help them understand visual content. The audio-described version of Handel's *The Resurrection* will be free of cost to members of the Blind and Partially Sighted communities. In addition, Pynkoski will offer a Pre-Show Chat on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 7pm ET on Zoom to offer insight into the film and answer any questions from the community.

Inspired by her exceptional first year as Artist In Residence with Opera Atelier, Pynkoski and Lajeunesse Zingg announce an expanded two-year appointment of soprano Brueggergosman as Artist In Residence (June 2021 to June 2023) - now a full-time position. The Artist in Residence is appointed on the basis of outstanding professional attainments, creative accomplishments, and a dedication to equity, diversity and inclusion in their creative domain. Brueggergosman will continue to contribute to the success of the company's artist training, education and outreach activities by leading lectures, demonstrations, and master classes over the two year period.

Brueggergosman will continue to shape Opera Atelier's popular *Making of an Opera* (MOAO) program - a free program, which launched in 1995, designed to introduce all aspects of opera to middle school and high school students from diverse backgrounds, and in particular, from Toronto's Neighbourhood Improvement areas - as well as teach master classes, and share her inimitable voice on Opera Atelier's digital channels, sharing blog posts, photos, interviews, and unique musical content.

"We are in an era of explosive innovation and creativity. *Making of an Opera* re-enforces the necessity of pouring into a student's potential through free access to the process behind the classical arts," says Brueggergosman. "I aim to provide students with an opportunity to explore new ways of thinking of the future and, in so doing, unlock a level of understanding that emboldens them to believe in themselves and embrace unlikely collaborations. The very restrictions imposed by COVID-19 became a catalyst for new creation and I believe the mandate of MOAO is to find points of connection that will allow students to expand their minds by learning each other's histories with respect and empathy."

Opera Atelier's Board of Directors is proud to announce that Brueggergosman has also been appointed Artist Advisor to the Board, effective immediately. In this capacity, Brueggergosman will join OA Artistic Directors in Board discussions regarding The Artist's Creative Process, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the performing arts.

After the triumphant success of Grétry's ***Richard Coeur-de-Lion*** in 2019 - directed by Pynkoski and choreographed by Lajeunesse Zingg at the Royal Opera House in Versailles - Opera Atelier's

Co-Artistic Directors have been invited back to Versailles for a remount of this production in November of 2021. At the request of Laurent Brunner, Director of Château de Versailles Spectacles, Pynkoski and Zingg's investiture ceremony as Officers of the Order of Arts and Letters (Officiers dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) by the Government of France will also be held in November 2021 on the stage of the Royal Opera House in Versailles - an unprecedented honour for Pynkoski, Lajeunesse Zingg, and Canada.

In the Spring of 2022, Pynkoski and Zingg will be making their debut at Opéra de Tours in a new production of a Grétry opera. Full details will be announced in January 2022.

"André Grétry's (1741-1813) fame in the 18th Century rivaled that of Mozart's - but because of *Richard Coeur-de Lion's* association with the French Royal Family, the opera was banned during the French Revolution," says Pynkoski.

Pynkoski and Zingg's Versailles production of Grétry's ***Richard Coeur-de-Lion*** marked the first time the opera had been performed in the Royal Opera House since the 18th Century. The CD and DVD of the production was the recipient of the prestigious Diamond Award from Opéra Magazine.

**Single tickets** for the return of **Handel's *The Resurrection*** will go on sale Wednesday, July 21, 2021. Tickets and information at [OperaAtelier.com](http://OperaAtelier.com)

Community members interested in viewing the Standard Audio Description version of the **production of Handel's *The Resurrection* or in attending the Pre-Show Chat**, hosted by Pynkoski, **on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 7pm ET on Zoom**, may register by visiting [OperaAtelier.com](http://OperaAtelier.com)

**Single tickets** for the Film Premiere of ***Angel*** will go on sale Friday, October 1, 2021. *A special online pre-sale for Opera Atelier subscribers will be available on Monday, September 27, 2021.* Tickets and information at [OperaAtelier.com](http://OperaAtelier.com)

*2021/22 Season Presenting Sponsor: BMO Financial Group*

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### **About Opera Atelier ([OperaAtelier.com](http://OperaAtelier.com))**

Opera Atelier is an opera/ballet company committed to creating period productions that are realized as complete artistic statements - built from the ground up with equal attention given to music, dancing, acting, and design. With a core repertoire that extends from Monteverdi to Mozart, Opera Atelier also explores period productions of later repertoire. For Opera Atelier, the pivotal aspect of period production lies in the in-depth examination of the original intentions of composers, choreographers and librettists in order to find new ways to challenge ourselves as artists in the 21st century. A period production is not a museum piece; it is a new creation and takes its own place in history. Opera Atelier's productions are performed in partnership with award-winning period-instrument orchestra, Tafelmusik, Elisa Citterio, Music Director. Opera Atelier strives to promote Canadian artists in its work, and is committed to training the next generation of Canadian singers, dancers, designers, and technicians through apprenticeships and extensive workshops. Opera Atelier is committed to expanding the company's audience, and to making period opera and ballet accessible to a wide public through touring, education programs and the creative use of media. Led by founding Artistic Directors Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg since 1985, Opera Atelier has toured to major opera houses and festivals internationally. Most recently, Pynkoski and Zingg

were both named members of the Order of Canada and Officers of the Order of Arts and Letters (Officiers dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) by the French Republic.

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