

ORCHESTRE CLASSIQUE DE MONTRÉAL



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THE OCM ANNOUNCES ITS 82nd SEASON: **WOMEN OF DISTINCTION** HOMAGE TO LOTTE BROTT

Montreal, Wednesday June 9th, 2021 – The **Orchestre Classique de Montréal (OCM)**, in its second year in residence at the Pierre-Mercure Hall, is proud to announce its 82nd season: ***Women of Distinction***. The season will pay homage to the 100th anniversary of a highly accomplished woman, principal cellist, co-founder of the OCM and Manager for over 4 decades, **Lotte Brott**.

"I am thrilled to be dedicating the 21-22 season celebrating great women, to my mother Lotte Goetzel Brott who was an extraordinary woman well ahead of her time. As her eldest son, I know she would be thrilled that the OCM is continuing the tradition of great music to which she and my father Alexander dedicated their lives." says Boris Brott, Artistic Director and principal conductor of the OCM.

After a season of online concerts broadcast from the Pierre-Mercure Hall, the OCM is looking forward to returning to this wonderful venue and to welcoming its audiences in person. For those who don't know the hall, they will be impressed with its superb acoustics, intimate size and flawless accessibility.

2021-2022 SEASON

The OCM has become known for its eclectic and diverse programming and continues on this path with a season featuring star-studded female soloists and new works by female composers. The season, presented by the BMO Bank, will feature 11 performances, including children's concerts. Unless otherwise mentioned, all performances will take place at 7:30pm and will be conducted by Boris Brott.

The OCM is proud to have commissioned three female composers, **Barbara Croall**, **Carmen Braden** and **Larysa Kuzmenko**, to present world premieres of their works during this season dedicated to women.

On **November 9th, 2021**, the OCM opens its season with ***Buechner, Barber & Beethoven*** featuring international pianist **Sara Davis Buechner** in Beethoven's piano concerto no. 3. The famous ***Adagio for Strings*** by Barber will open the concert, and the Beethoven-Mahler ***String Quartet no. 11*** will embellish the program. This concert will also be a fundraiser for GRIS Montréal, a non-profit organization that demystifies sexual orientation and gender identity.

On **November 23rd, 2021**, the OCM presents ***Tales and Melodies*** featuring **Barbara Croall** in a premiere of her own concerto for pigwagan (Anishnaabe wooden flute) ***Gwekaanmat***, while mezzo-soprano **Julie Boulianne** will be featured in a new arrangement by François Vallières, of Ravel's ***Shéhérazade***. She will also perform with pianist **Jean-Philippe Sylvestre**, Ravel's ***Cinq melodies populaires grecques***.

On **December 7th, 2021**, OCM's annual and very popular performance of Handel's *Messiah* returns to the Oratoire St-Joseph with a wonderful quartet of soloists: **Jacqueline Woodley**, soprano, **Marie-Andrée Mathieu**, mezzo, **Antoine Bélanger**, tenor, and **Neil Craighead**, bass-baritone. **Les Rugissants**, directed by **Xavier Brossard-Ménard**, will shine in Handel's famous choruses.

On **February 15th, 2022**, the OCM presents *Echoes of the Steppes*, a program of Slavic composers including *Melodiya* by **Myroslav Skoryk**, a premiere by Canadian-Ukrainian composer **Larysa Kuzmenko** called *Kurelek's Gallery*, and *Serenade for Strings* by **Dvorak**. Trumpet player **Karen Donnelly** and pianist **Serhiy Salov** will perform the Shostakovich **Concerto in C minor, opus 35**.

Bizet's famous opera *Carmen* will be presented in an abridged version the OCM is calling **Carmen For Four**. Two staged performances will take place: **March 8 & 9, 2022**, directed by Centaur Theatre's Artistic Director **Eda Holmes**. *Carmen* will be played by mezzo-soprano **Julie Nesrallah**, **Ernesto Ramirez** as Don José, **Suzanne Taffot** as Micaela and **Hugo Laporte** as Escamillo.

On **April 28th, 2022**, renowned Montreal soprano **Karina Gauvin** will be the star of OCM's *Forever Handel* concert featuring arias and works by G. F. Handel. This concert will be a co-production with **Ensemble Caprice** and will be co-conducted by **Boris Brott** and **Matthias Maute**.

The penultimate concert of the season, on **May 17th, 2022** will be called *Grandes Québécoises*. It will feature harpist **Valérie Milhot**, pianist **Élizabeth Pion**, guitarist **Annie Labrie**, and flutist **Nadia Labrie**. **Boris Brott** and **Geneviève Leclair** will co-conduct this performance featuring Mozart's *Harp and flute concerto K299*, Haydn's *Piano concerto in D major*, and Patrick Roux's *Concerto Tradicionuevo*. A new work for string orchestra, dedicated to Lotte Brott and written by **Carmen Braden**, entitled *She rides her bike with a cello on her back and a baby in the basket*, will be premiered.

A larger symphonic concert will end the season at the Maison Symphonique on May 27th, 2022, and will be announced at a later date.

HONOURING GREAT WOMEN OF QUEBEC

Along with presenting amazing female performers and composers, the OCM will also honour one highly accomplished woman outside the music field at each of its performances. Here is the list of very distinguished women to be honoured at the start of each performance (see biographies below):

November 9, 2021: **Marie Houzeau**
November 23, 2021: **Joséphine Bacon**
December 7, 2021: **Suzanne Fortier**
February 15, 2022: **Marlene Jennings**
March 8, 2022: **Danièle Henkel**
April 28, 2022: **Monique Bégin**
May 17, 2022: **Pauline Marois**

"Celebrating the exceptional contributions of women across many dimensions of Quebec life is an initiative that is very dear to my heart. I am proud and delighted that our organisation will be honouring this diverse group of highly accomplished women next season." says Deborah Corber, OCM Board Chair

MUSIC FOR EVERYONE

For a third year in a row, the OCM continues its outreach initiative *Music For Everyone* which has as the goal of making its performances accessible to all. This initiative has already touched the

lives of over 1000 new immigrants, hundreds of senior citizens and disadvantaged community members. The OCM will continue expanding this initiative by working with several new immigrant organizations, hospitals and retirement centers. Classical music truly IS for everyone!

YOUTH AND EDUCATION

Every year, the OCM presents youth concerts bringing classical music to thousands of children between the ages of 5 and 12. This past year, the featured digital presentation was a film version of *Beethoven & the Bully* which reached over 5,000 children. Next year, children will be delighted by a co-production between the OCM and Jeunesses Musicales called *Opera Candy: The Gourmet Adventure of Hansel & Gretel*, directed by Alain Gauthier.

TICKETS

Ticket sales for this upcoming season will be announced at the end of summer or early fall at the very latest. Given the pandemic and the ever-changing health regulations, the OCM needs to wait a bit longer before having a clearer picture of seat allocation so as to assure everyone's safety. Stay tuned for more details.

About the OCM

The **Orchestre Classique de Montréal** (OCM) was founded in 1939 by violinist, conductor, and composer Alexander Brott and cellist and manager Lotte Brott. The OCM quickly became one of Canada's most established chamber orchestras, touring five continents, recording extensively, and appearing regularly on radio and television. Now led by **Boris Brott**, OC, OQ, the elder son of Alexander and one of Canada's most internationally renowned conductors, the OCM is a vibrant, innovative, and flexible ensemble consisting of the city's best professional musicians. The OCM presents concerts throughout the year and is now in residence at the Salle Pierre-Mercure. Fulfilling its mission of celebrating diversity and inclusivity, the OCM has created the program *Music for Everyone* which enables collaborations with numerous new immigrant communities and Montreal organizations in making OCM's performances accessible to all. The OCM proudly acknowledges **BMO Bank of Montreal** as its 2021-22 Season Presenter.

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