



## LA BOHÈME UNDER THE STARS

Opera simulcast on a giant screen at Percival Molson Memorial Stadium,  
an event on the official program of Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations

SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2017, AT 7:30 PM

**FREE**

Presented by



Montreal, Tuesday, May 2, 2017 — Bringing its season to a magnificent close, the **Opéra de Montréal**, through a partnership with **The Society for the Celebration of Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**, **BMO Financial Group**, the **Montreal Alouettes**, the **Société de transport de Montréal**, and the **Orchestre Métropolitain**, is especially delighted to be able to offer 15,000 people the opportunity to attend a free open-air operatic event at **Percival Molson Memorial Stadium**, on **Saturday, May 27, 2017, at 7:30 pm**. The event, which is part of the official programming for Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary, will take place rain or shine and will be preceded by the Opéra's outreach activities. The STM will also be making a shuttle service available from the McGill metro station.

The final performance of one of the most well-loved operas in the repertoire—*La bohème* by Puccini, presented in Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier—**will be simulcast on five giant screens** installed in **Percival Molson Memorial Stadium**. **This is a free EVENT, but tickets—available via the Opéra de Montréal's website at [boheme.operademontreal.com](http://boheme.operademontreal.com)—are required. 15,000 tickets are available, starting today.**

The opera is performed in Italian with English and French surtitles. During intermissions, spectators will be able to keep watching the giant screens to get a look at all the frenzied activity going on behind the scenes, where they will also meet the artists, designers, and craftspeople who bring the production to life. This outdoor event is in keeping with the Opéra de Montréal's mission of democratization, and social and community outreach. The first *Under the Stars* event took place in June 2005, with a simulcast of *Carmen* by Bizet, brilliantly bringing the company's 25<sup>th</sup> season to a close. Verdi's *Aida* was presented in June 2006, and in June 2008, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* drew some 33,000 spectators to the Esplanade at Place des Arts to attend a captivating simulcast of the opera on a giant screen.

"Finally, opera accessible to everyone! What a wonderful opportunity for all Montrealers to experience an unforgettable moment... Under the stars!" stated Alain Gignac, General Manager of the Society for the Celebration of Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

"It is through projects of this scope that our cultural metropolis is distinguishing itself in such a remarkable fashion. The Montreal community is delighted to see a free cultural event that will allow its citizens to celebrate Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary while familiarizing themselves with opera," added Mr. Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montreal.

### **La bohème**

Italian composer Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème* is one of the most well-loved operas in the repertoire. What makes it so popular? Part of it may be because the opera speaks about each and everyone one of us... our youth, our love, our friendship, our suffering. *La bohème* takes audiences through a full range of emotions, from straightforward laughs to heartrending tears, all wrapped up in music that goes straight to the heart. The story: in 19<sup>th</sup> century Paris, budding young artists, filled with hope and life, celebrate friendship, sharing, and love... A story based on *Scènes de la vie de bohème* by French writer Henry Murger.

All of the soloists are Canadian. Soprano **France Bellemare** (Mimi), winner of the Concours musical international de Montréal in June 2015, who has since gone on to become a rising star in the opera world, is now making her company debut in a lead role. Tenor **Luc Robert** (Rodolfo) recently made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera. Their "bohemian" friends are portrayed by several former Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal artists: soprano **Lucia Cesaroni** (Musetta), baritone **Justin Welsh** (Marcello), baritone **Christopher Dunham** (Schaunard), and bass-baritone **Alexandre Sylvestre** (Colline). Parpignol is sung by eclectic tenor **Isabeau Proulx-Lemire**, a current member of the Atelier lyrique; bass-baritone **Clermont Tremblay** is the Customs Officer; bass **Claude Grenier** sings Alcindoro/Benoît; and bass **Alain Duguay** portrays the Sergeant. Directing the production is **Alain Gauthier**, who has won praise for his inventive and classic stagings, and more recently for *Elektra*, which left its mark on the Montreal scene in 2015. Set design is by **Olivier Landreville**, active both on the theatre scene and on television, who also designed *Pagliacci/Schicchi* for the company in 2009, recipient of the Opus Award for "Show of the Year." Conductor **James Meena** leads the **Orchestre Métropolitain**, lighting is by **Claude Accolas**, and costumes are by the Opéra de Montréal.

### **Alouettes' Blood Drive**

For their part, the Alouettes will hold their annual blood drive, presented by BMO, at the Opéra de Montréal's home base in Place des Arts, on **Monday, May 15**. Several Alouettes players, as well as their head coach Jacques Chapdelaine, will be on hand to greet all of the generous donors. The public is welcome to come donate at the Salon Urbain, from 10 am to 7 pm.

### **Opéra de Montréal**

Founded in 1980 and based in Montreal, the Opéra de Montréal is the largest francophone opera company in North America. Each season, close to 50,000 spectators make their way through the doors at the company, which is under the direction of General Director Patrick Corrigan and Artistic Director Michel Beaulac. Its season is made up of four to five operas, activities and concerts by the Atelier lyrique, and outreach activities. The Opéra is a key player in the city's economic, cultural, and social development as, each season, it maintains working relationships with over 360 local businesses, and hires no less than 800 artists and craftspeople. Close to 80% of the artists appearing at the company are Canadian.

### **About the Society for the Celebration of Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Society for the Celebration of Montréal's 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is a non-profit organization whose mission is to organize the festivities and socioeconomic initiatives that will mark Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2017. With a focus on promoting Montreal expertise, it acts as a catalyst for unifying forces to fulfill its mandate of mobilizing the community, implementing a funding strategy, wisely managing financial resources, developing a high-quality program of events, and promoting the festivities.

The Society receives financial support from the City of Montreal, the Government of Quebec, the Government of Canada, as well as private funding from twelve Great Montrealers. For more information: [375mtl.com](http://375mtl.com)

All of our press releases, along with complementary photos and videos, are available in our virtual Press Room by [clicking here](#).

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For more information on the Government of Quebec's contribution to Montreal's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary, [click here](#).

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