

Opera Atelier lays claim to a new period in their 2012-2013 season
Weber's iconic German Romantic opera Der Freischütz (The Marksman)
will be paired with a revival of the family-friendly favourite The Magic Flute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 7, 2012 (Toronto, ON) – Opera Atelier's founding Co-Artistic Directors Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg today announced plans for their **2012-2013 season**, which will include OA's first production from the Romantic period in the company's 26-year history. Premiered in 1821, Weber's ***Der Freischütz (The Marksman)*** is based on German folklore and folk music and is widely considered the first and most important German Romantic opera. This is an artistically bold move into uncharted territory for Opera Atelier, which has previously dealt exclusively with Baroque and Classical work from the 17th and 18th centuries. It is part of the company's ongoing mission to shake off the preconceptions about "period production" by reimagining and revitalizing the great works of the entire operatic canon. *Der Freischütz (The Marksman)* will open Opera Atelier's 2012-2013 season, followed by a revival of Mozart's wildly popular ***The Magic Flute***.

"This may be the biggest repertoire announcement of our company's history," says Co-Artistic Director **Marshall Pynkoski**. "No historical period exists in a vacuum, and we have long been interested in exploring the influences of the Baroque period on artists working in its wake. The interplay of artistic themes and styles between the Baroque and Romantic worlds is indisputable, and we look forward to exploring these connections in *Der Freischütz* while we treat our audience to an experience that is at once entirely new and absolutely identifiable as the work of Opera Atelier."

Der Freischütz (The Marksman) is the story of Max, a young man who must pass a test of marksmanship in order to win his love's hand and claim his position in the community. Frustrated at practice, Max enters into a Faustian deal for seven magic bullets: six will unerringly hit their intended mark, and the final one is at the command of the devil. The bullets are forged at midnight under the watchful eye of Samiel, the satanic huntsman. At the contest the following day, the seventh bullet becomes a catalyst for unimagined horrors. With its emotional intensity, integration of German folk legend, and depiction of nature as both sublime and untamable, *Der Freischütz (The Marksman)* is a quintessential work of the Romantic era.

Der Freischütz (The Marksman) is a powerful vehicle for Croatian tenor **Krešimir Špicer** (who played the title roles in OA's productions of *Idomeneo* and *La Clemenza di Tito*) as the title marksman Max. He is joined by baritone **Vasil Garvanliev** as the villain Kaspar, soprano **Meghan Lindsay** as the heroine Agathe, soprano **Carla Huhtanen** as her companion Änchen, baritone **Curtis Sullivan** as the satanic huntsman Samiel, bass-baritone **Olivier Laquerre** as head forester Kuno, baritone **Michael Nyby** double-cast as the peasant Killian and Prince Ottokar, and bass **Michael Uloth** as the wise hermit. *Der Freischütz (The Marksman)* will feature the full corps of the **Artists of Atelier Ballet**. The creative team includes director **Marshall Pynkoski**, choreographer **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg**, set designer **Gerard Gauci**, costume designer **Martha Mann**, and lighting designer **Bonnie Beecher**. Music Director **David Fallis** conducts the **Tafelmusik Orchestra and Chamber Choir**. *Der Freischütz (The Marksman)* runs **October 27, 28, 30, 31, November 2 and 3, 2012** and will be sung in German with English SURTITLES™. This exciting venture is made possible in part by the extraordinary generosity of Production Underwriter Michael A. Wekerle.

The Magic Flute is Mozart's final work, and is one of the most-performed operas worldwide. It is about a prince, Tamino, who is sent by The Queen of the Night to rescue her daughter Pamina from her nemesis Sarastro. Accompanied by the endearingly incorrigible Papageno and with the aid of a magic flute, the besotted Tamino ventures into the temple and quickly finds that all is not as it seems. An enchanting tale that delights audiences of all ages, *The Magic Flute* is perhaps Mozart's greatest popular success.

The Magic Flute will reunite several of the cast members from Opera Atelier's 2006 production, including **Colin Ainsworth** as Tamino and **Olivier Laquerre** as Papageno. They will be joined by **Ambur Braid** as The Queen of the Night, **Mireille Asselin** as Papagena, **Laura Albino** as Pamina, and **João Fernandes** as Sarastro, as well as **Aaron Ferguson**, **Eve McLeod**, **Laura Pudwell** and **Curtis Sullivan** with the full corps of the **Artists of Atelier Ballet**. The creative team includes director **Marshall Pynkoski**, choreographer **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg**, set designer **Gerard Gauci**, and lighting designer **Kevin Fraser**. Music Director **David Fallis** conducts the **Tafelmusik Orchestra and Chamber Choir**. *The Magic Flute* runs **April 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13, 2013** and will be sung in English with English SURTITLES™.

Performances for Opera Atelier's 2012-2013 Season will take place at the **Elgin Theatre** (189 Yonge Street) in Toronto with evening performances at **7:30 p.m.**, and Sunday matinee performances at **3:00 p.m.** Subscriptions start at \$90 and are on sale now by calling **416-703-3767 x222**. Single tickets go on sale on August 7, 2012. For more information visit www.operaatelier.com.

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

2012-2013 Major Sponsors

Season Sponsor: Sun Life Financial

Der Freischütz Production Underwriter: Michael A. Wekerle

Der Freischütz Production Sponsor: BMO Financial Group

The Magic Flute Production Sponsor: Scotiabank

Opera Atelier is Canada's premier Baroque 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. Over the past twenty-six years, lead by founding artistic directors Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg, Opera Atelier has garnered acclaim for its performances at home as well as in the United States, Europe and Asia.

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