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**Silver Anniversary Versailles Gala raises record setting \$150,000 for  
Opera Atelier**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Toronto, ON (April 20, 2011) ...The Opera Atelier Silver Anniversary 2011 Versailles Gala was a resounding success, doubling its net goal and raising \$150,000 to support the company's education and outreach programs.

Following the company's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary silver theme this year, this event at The Carlu was hosted by **Jeanne Beker** of Fashion Television with a sumptuous menu designed by Chef **Corbin Tomaszewski** of the Food Network, and edible centrepieces by Nadege. This year's attendance increased by 30% over last year's gala to 230 guests at the April 6<sup>th</sup> event.

The turquoise and silver themed evening, the most opulent gala in Opera Atelier's history, featured a tableaux and fashion show of 10 of Opera Atelier's most iconic costumes, complete with runway, performances by **Measha Brueggergosman**, **Michael Maniaci**, **Krešimir Špicer**, **Mireille Lebel** and the Artists of the Atelier Ballet of Opera Atelier's production of Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*, and students from the School of Atelier Ballet, plus a live and silent auction.

"We have a great deal of fun doing the Gala," said Co-Artistic Director **Marshall Pynkoski**, who complemented the black tie crowd with his trademark black tee and jeans ensemble. "I am always amazed at the energy in the room – it's an opportunity for us to thank our regular donors, and for new people to discover us. We met a remarkable man, **Mike Wekerle**, who made an astounding five-figure gift immediately following the fashion show. He came as a guest and was so moved that he supported us on the spot! Incredible!"

The record-breaking Live Auction raised more than \$35,000 and was conducted by Sotheby's president **David Silcox, C.M.** with one-of-a-kind items including a private tour of the Chateau de Versailles, a week's vacation for six at the exclusive Italian resort Torre Fiore, and a complete wardrobe of 25 Canadian couture pieces, donated by 25 top Canadian fashion designers such as Philip Sparks, David Dixon, Farley Chatto, Franco Mirabelli and Rita Tessolin, worth over \$25,000.

Event sponsors included BMO Financial Group (presenting sponsor), Stoli (wine and spirit sponsor), Freedman & Associates Inc. Marketing Consultants, The Globe and Mail, Links of London, Mindham Fine Jewellery, Pulp&Fiber and Sotheby's. The gala was managed by Bassett Events.

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Opera Atelier 2011 Versailles Gala Committee was chaired by Ambur Braid, COC Ensemble Studio Member. Members included Monique Charbonneau-Peebles, Farley Chatto, Clare Christensen, Nancy Hitzig, Meredith Keeve, and Kara Wood.

Opera Atelier is currently in rehearsals for its new production of Mozart's rare masterpiece *La Clemenza di Tito* which runs **April 22 to May 1** at Toronto's Elgin Theatre (189 Yonge Street). For tickets call TicketMaster at **416-872-5555** or go on-line at [www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca) or at the Elgin Theatre box office.

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