

OPERA | 16 ATELIER | 17

Media contact:
Bronwen Bradley
bronwen.bradley@operaatelier.com
416-703-3767 x224

Press-quality photos:
operaatelier.com/media/photos

Tragicomic English Masterpiece *Dido and Aeneas* Opens Opera Atelier's Season

- Purcell's opera features soprano Wallis Giunta and the Toronto Children's Chorus -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Toronto, ON (Oct. 6, 2016) – Opera Atelier's season begins in October with a new production of *Dido and Aeneas*, featuring Wallis Giunta and Christopher Enns as the title couple. The opera is derived from ancient myth and features a powerful, complex female protagonist. This English masterpiece is a great introduction to opera for adults and children alike. *Dido and Aeneas* runs Oct. 20-29, 2016 at the Elgin Theatre.

DATES & TIMES: Thursday Oct. 20, 7:30 pm (media night)
Saturday Oct. 22, 7:30 pm
Sunday Oct. 23, 3:00 pm
Tuesday Oct. 25, 7:30 pm
Friday Oct. 28, 7:30 pm
Saturday Oct. 29, 4:30 pm

TICKET PRICES: \$39 - \$194

BOX OFFICE: Ticketmaster at **1-855-622-ARTS(2787)** or www.ticketmaster.ca

VENUE: The Elgin Theatre, 189 Yonge Street, Toronto

WEB PAGE: www.operaatelier.com

Dido and Aeneas, based on Virgil's epic poem *The Aeneid*, was composed by Henry Purcell with libretto by Nahum Tate at the end of the 1680s. It is the story of Dido, the widowed queen of Carthage, who embarks on a blatant affair with the mesmerizing Trojan prince Aeneas. When he abandons her, she bravely embraces her one alternative to a life of humiliation and regret.

Dido and Aeneas will feature one of Canada's most important young mezzo-sopranos **Wallis Giunta** and tenor **Christopher Enns** making their role debuts as Dido and Aeneas, and includes **Meghan Lindsay** (Belinda), **Laura Pudwell** (Sorceress), **Ellen McAteer**, **Karine White**, and **Cory Knight**. The opera will open with a prologue featuring excerpts from *The Aeneid* performed by Stratford actor **Irene Poole** with Artists of Atelier Ballet. In a nod to the 17th-century performances that took place at Josias Priest's girls school in London, the off-stage chorus for *Dido and Aeneas* will feature young singers from **Toronto Children's Chorus**. *Dido and Aeneas* is sung in English.

Dido and Aeneas will be directed by **Marshall Pynkoski** and choreographed by **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg**, with set design by **Gerard Gauci** and lighting design by **Michelle Ramsay**. Both productions will feature the full corps of **Artists of Atelier Ballet**, and **Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra** under the baton of **David Fallis**.

Opera Atelier has a long history with *Dido and Aeneas*. The company was officially launched in 1986 with a production at the Royal Ontario Museum and it has since toured to Korea, Singapore, the United States, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy and England, where it played at Royal Albert Hall celebrating the 100th anniversary of the BBC Proms and the Purcell tercentenary. The production was most recently presented in 2005 at the Elgin Theatre.

Opera Atelier is proud to welcome Syrian refugees to our production of *Dido and Aeneas* free of charge through Canada Council for the Arts' program, *The Arts and Culture Welcome Refugees*.

Opera Atelier's 16-17 season continues in 2017 with Marc-Antoine Charpentier's **Medea** (Elgin Theatre April 22-29, Palace of Versailles May 19-21).

Tickets for *Dido and Aeneas* start at \$39 and can be purchased through Ticketmaster at **1-855-622-ARTS(2787)** or www.ticketmaster.ca, or at the Elgin Theatre Box Office (189 Yonge Street). Group discounts (10+ people) are available by calling 416-703-3767 x222. For more information, visit www.operaatelier.com.

\$15 Operatix tickets may be purchased by patrons under 30 in person at the Elgin Theatre Box Office or online with the code OPERATIX. (Subject to availability. Valid I.D. required at pick-up.) **NEW!** Special Operatix Evening on Friday October 28, featuring a post-performance party with Opera Atelier artists for ticket-holders age 30 and under. The Operatix program is proudly sponsored by **TD**.

2016-2017 Major Sponsors

Season Presenting Sponsor: BMO Financial Group

Season Underwriter: El Mocambo Productions

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

Opera Atelier is North America's premier period opera/ballet company, producing the opera, ballet and drama of the 17th, 18th, and 19th 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. Led by founding artistic directors Marshall Pynkoski and Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg since 1985, Opera Atelier has garnered acclaim for its performances at home as well as in the United States, Europe and Asia.

-END-

Images are available for download at operaatelier.com