



ORCHESTRE  
MÉTROPOLITAIN  
Yannick Nézet-Séguin



# A NORDIC TALE



2022

2021





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# A NORDIC TALE



Yannick Nézet-Séguin, *conductor*  
Jean-Philippe Sylvestre, *piano*

**Friday,  
February 11, 2022  
7:30 p.m.**

Maison symphonique  
de Montréal



Live webcast.  
Also available  
until February 13.

This program was produced by the  
Orchestre Métropolitain.

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## Isabelle PANNETON

Promenade

- I. À pas lents
- II. Au loin

*Performance time: about 10 minutes*

## MATHIEU

Concerto de Québec

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Andante
- III. Allegro con brio

*Performance time: about 24 minutes*

## 20-minute intermission

Broadcast of a documentary on  
the OM's 40th anniversary

## SIBELIUS

Symphony No. 4

- I. Tempo molto moderato, quasi adagio
- II. Allegro molto vivace
- III. Il tempo largo
- IV. Allegro

*Performance time: about 36 minutes*

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**PlacedesArts.com**





# YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR &  
PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR



The Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000, Yannick Nézet-Séguin signed a “lifelong” commitment with the Orchestre in September 2019. In September 2018, he became the third Music Director of the Metropolitan Opera (MET), New York in addition to his ongoing duties as Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, where he has served since 2012. In 2016-2017, he became a lifetime Honorary Member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. After a ten-year tenure with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, he was appointed Honorary Conductor in 2019, a position he holds to this day.

He has worked regularly with many leading European ensembles and enjoyed many close collaborations with the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Wiener Philharmoniker, Sinfonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunk and Chamber Orchestra of Europe as well as the London Philharmonic Orchestra, of which he was Principal Guest Conductor from 2008 to 2014. His opera interpretations have been acclaimed in many of the world’s most famous houses, including the Metropolitan Opera (New York), La Scala (Milan), and the Royal Opera House (London), in the Salzburg Festival, as well as in such renowned concert halls as the Musikverein (Vienna), the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam) and Carnegie Hall (New York).

Yannick Nézet-Séguin records exclusively for Deutsche Grammophon label while continuing his role in the collaborative partnership between ATMA Classique and the OM. His honours include being named Artist of the Year by the prestigious magazine Musical America and receiving the Virginia Parker Award, a Royal Philharmonic Society Award (London), Canada’s National Arts Centre Award (Ottawa), the Prix Denise-Pelletier, awarded by the Quebec government, the Medal of Honor of the National Assembly of Quebec, the Oskar Morawetz Award and Orchestras Canada’s Betty Webster Award.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin holds six honorary doctorates (Université du Québec à Montréal, 2011; Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia, 2014; Rider University, Princeton, 2015; McGill University, Montreal, 2017; Université de Montréal, 2017; Pennsylvania University, 2018) and has been made a Companion of the Order of Canada (2012), Companion of the Quebec Order for the Arts and Literature (2015), Officer of the National Order of Quebec (2015), Officer of the Ordre de Montréal (2017) and honorary member of the Royal Conservatory of Music (2020).

[www.yannicknezetseguin.com](http://www.yannicknezetseguin.com)



# JEAN-PHILIPPE SYLVESTRE

PIANO



In 2008, Jean-Philippe Sylvestre received the prestigious Virginia Parker Prize, the highest distinction awarded by the Canada Council for the Arts. Recipient of the first prize and the people's choice award at the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal competition, he is also a winner of the CBC National Competition for Young Performers, the people's choice award and the Concertino Praga International Competition.

Jean-Philippe Sylvestre claimed first prize three times at the Canadian Music Competition as well as the highest score at one of them. In 2015, he was granted a residency in Paris by the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec. He has performed in a number of famous venues, including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Musikverein in Vienna, the Gaveau and Cortot halls and Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris, the Oriol Martorell hall in Barcelona, the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels, the St-Pierre des Cuisines auditorium in Toulouse and the Fundação de Educação Artística in Brazil, to name only those.

More recently, he was invited to give a concert at the prestigious Piano Folies festival in Touquet, France, which was followed by a seven-concert tour in Australia. He also performed at the Wilfrid-Pelletier, Pierre-Mercure and

Bourgie halls in Montreal, the Glenn Gould Studio and George Weston Recital Hall in Toronto, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa and Domaine Forget in Saint-Irénée and was asked by Kent Nagano to perform a recital in the Classical Spree series.

In recent years, he has been heard as a soloist with the Nürnberg Philharmonic Orchestra in Germany and the Orchestre symphonique de Québec, Orchestre Métropolitain, Orchestre symphonique de Laval, Orchestre classique de Montréal and Orchestre symphonique de Longueuil.

Jean-Philippe Sylvestre has made several recordings, most notably of concertos by André Mathieu, Rachmaninoff and Jacques Hétu with the Orchestre Métropolitain and Orchestre symphonique de Laval. The discs have received rave reviews and Juno, ADISQ and Opus award nominations. He will record another disc, this time with the London Symphony Orchestra, in April and will perform in the United States in May and at the Philharmonie in Berlin in June. Conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin has called him a “poet of the piano.”





# ISABELLE PANNETON

(BORN 1955)



## Promenade

*Premiered in Montreal on April 14, 2001, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin*

“On describing her processes, the composer speaks metaphorically, of a harmonic elaboration in the form of spider webs. Common pitches link harmonic regions, a sort of bridge that brings together different planes of the sonic landscape. This is a music endowed with a vibrant sensibility, and evocative gestures wrought from an abstract lyricism.”

SMCQ website

After studying composition with Gilles Tremblay in Montreal and Philippe Boesmans in Belgium, Isabelle Panneton was the recipient of several prestigious prizes. A highly regarded instructor, she has taught at the faculty of music at the Université de Montréal since 1995, eventually becoming the faculty’s dean in 2011.

Her most notable works include *Volando* (1999) for violin and orchestra, which was premiered by the SMCQ, *Travaux et jeux de gravité* for chamber orchestra (2004 Opus award in the Recording of the Year – Contemporary and Modern Music category) and the children’s opera *L’Arche*, based on a libretto by Anne Hébert and premiered in 2004 by NEM and the Atelier lyrique de l’Opéra de Montréal.

A long friendship binds the Orchestre Métropolitain and Isabelle Panneton. As far back as 1989, under the baton of Agnes Grossmann, the OM premiered *Récits*, her first work for full orchestra. In 2001, the work was *Promenade*, this time under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and, in 2008, *Rebonds* for marimba and orchestra, again under Yannick. The composer also took part in the A Shared Solitude project at the 2020 Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur. Performed by Yannick Nézet-Séguin and the OM in collaboration with the Festival, this webcast series of dance and music premieres was a soothing balm in the midst of the pandemic.

*Promenade* has two movements. The first, the composer explains, “...develops swirls on either side of a descending line with long values, like when a stroller’s gaze rests here and there, guided by turns in the path.” In the second, we hear “...bursts of repeated notes that gradually invade the orchestra and sculpt rhythmic patterns pitted against each other.”





# ANDRÉ MATHIEU

(1929-1968)



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## Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 25, “Concerto de Québec”

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In June 1943, the 14-year-old André Mathieu completed the first version of what would become his *Piano Concerto No. 3*. Three years later, Paul L’Anglais asked Giuseppe Agostini to adapt and orchestrate the work for the film *Whispering City*, shot in Quebec City by the Russian-American director Fedor Ozep. The hero of the film noir is a young composer with a concerto about to be premiered. The score was later revised by Marc Bélanger and Gilles Bellemare, who nicknamed it “the Quebec City concerto.”

Not unlike Saint-Saëns’s *Concerto No. 2*, the work begins with a piano cadenza. The orchestra enters with a patriotic-sounding theme that prompts a passionate intervention by the piano. More themes follow, each more beautiful than the last, this wealth of inspiration taking the place of a formal development.

The second movement opens with an irresistible melody that rides on Romantic left-hand arpeggios; here again, Mathieu doesn’t skimp on the quality or quantity of his themes. Against a backdrop of *pizzicatti* and with growing assurance, the piano embarks on a passionate ascent to a peroration. Introduced by trills on the piano, the coda spins a shimmering, dream-like atmosphere that brings the movement to a close.

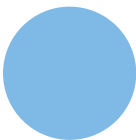
The finale is propelled by a folksy theme. The piano rears up in response to a second orchestral theme until the oboe leads it and the orchestra into a set of mini variations that has the protagonists trading prodigiously proffered tunes. Following the return of the main theme, all the musicians head into new territory: a boogie-woogie bass in the left hand syncopatedly drives the discourse toward the signature, a triplet of eighth notes followed by an quarter note, beating out the name An-dré-Ma-thieu and ending a work that continues the tradition of the grand Rachmanioffian post-Romantic concerto.





# JEAN SIBELIUS

(1865-1957)



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## Symphony No. 4 in A minor, Op. 63

*Premiered in Helsinki on April 3, 1911, conducted by Sibelius*

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At the start of his career especially, Jean Sibelius drew inspiration from the legends of his homeland, Finland, composing symphonic poems whose patriotic nostalgia made him famous. He later expanded his sources of inspiration, opening himself to a more personal and mediative expression far from the concerns of his composer contemporaries. Ensconced in his villa in Järvenpää since 1904 – he was now 39 years old – and granted a government pension, Sibelius built a highly original work that, as François-René Tranchefort writes, “reveals itself to be an expression of ‘pure music’ angst.”

He completed the fourth of his seven symphonies in 1911, shortly after undergoing an operation for throat cancer (he would fear a return of the disease for the remainder of his life). The work is dark, austere and uncompromising, and the order of its four movements strays from the classical model. The material is based

on the tritone, the augmented fourth, an interval that generates tension and unease. Sibelius uses the interval rigorously within a singular thematic logic that has the most distant tones clashing together. Though he didn’t abandon the tonal principle as some of his peers were preparing to do, Sibelius blurs and jostles it, which, according to Kalevi Kuosa, can be seen as “his reply to the questions posed by the tonal crisis of the music of his time.”

The work was not well received, as the composer’s wife noted: “People avoided looking us directly, wore ironic, furtive, embarrassed smiles...” With time, the symphony became established, especially in the United States, where it was championed by Toscanini. Despite its obvious pessimism, some will understand it as an expression of courage in the face of adversity. In any event, Marc Vignal has declared it “one of the 20th century’s most radical scores.”







**First violins**

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Concertmaster  
Marcelle Mallette  
Associate Concertmaster  
Johanne Morin  
Assistant Concertmaster  
Alain Giguère  
Second Assistant  
Concertmaster  
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Robin Best  
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One of Quebec's key cultural ambassadors, the Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal (OM) is celebrating its 40th anniversary this season. At its inception in 1981, the OM set the bar high: to build a unique relationship with the community through high-impact initiatives. Over the last 20 years, the Orchestre has grown alongside its artistic director and principal conductor, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, whose career continues to reach new heights. In September 2019, the OM announced that Nézet-Séguin had signed on for an exceptional lifetime contract.

This special relationship resonates throughout the community, with 50 concerts performed annually at the Maison symphonique and across the city, thanks to the Conseil des arts de Montréal Touring Program. The OM also puts on webcast and open-air concerts. Driven by excellence, the ensemble is known for its bold presence, authenticity and community engagement.

Proud to have expanded its educational initiatives, including The OM for Schools and The OM for Future Talent, the Orchestre strives to cultivate a passion for music among young people.

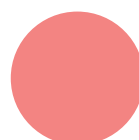
The OM also regularly collaborates with other high-calibre cultural organizations in Quebec, serving as the Opéra de Montréal's orchestra. Following the success of its 2017 European tour, the OM and Yannick Nézet-Séguin travelled to the US in November 2019 with soprano Joyce DiDonato, winning over audiences in Chicago, Ann Arbor, New York and Philadelphia.

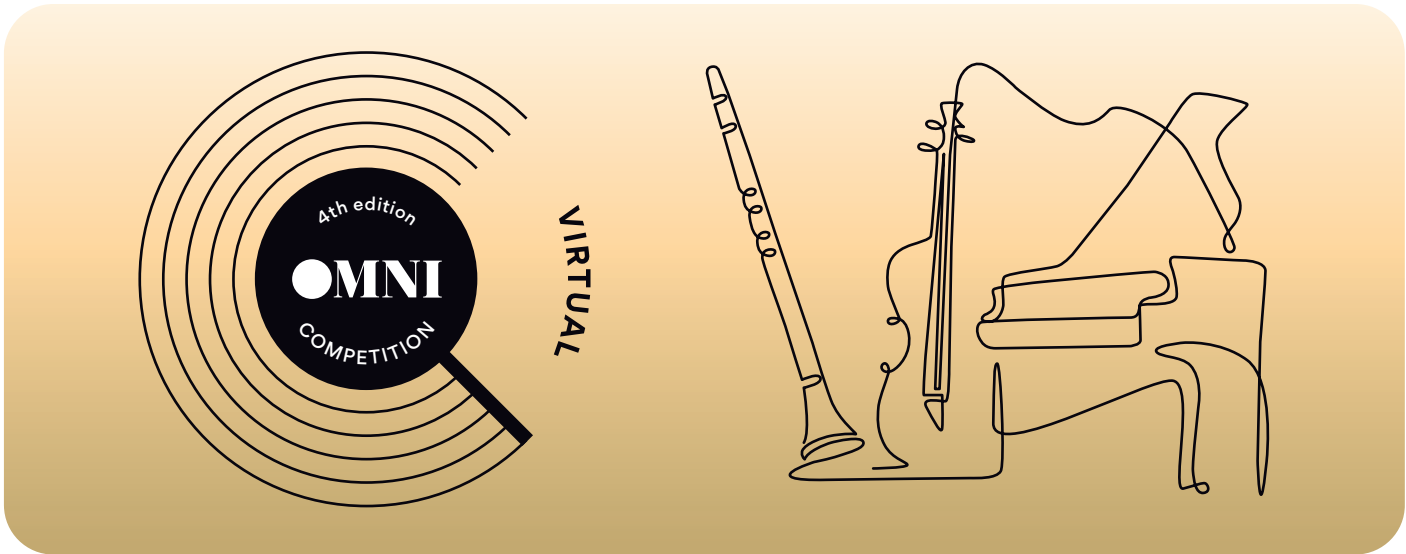


The winner of multiple national awards, the OM has recorded some 20 performances with the Canadian ATMA Classique label, including Bruckner's symphonies, which were released in spring 2018. The Orchestre has also collaborated with Deutsche Grammophon to release two albums with renowned singers Rolando Villazón and Ildar Abdrazakov (*Duets* in 2017 and *Verdi* in 2019).

More recently, the Orchestre performed all nine Beethoven symphonies for its *Summer of Beethoven* webcast series available exclusively on DG Stage. This initiative made the OM one of the first orchestras to come together again after the COVID-19 crisis forced ensembles across the globe to go on hiatus.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Orchestre Métropolitain has rolled out numerous digital initiatives, which has helped it stay connected with audience members during this unprecedented time.





# OMNI MUSIC COMPETITION

### Know any talented young musicians?

For the fourth edition of the Orchestre Métropolitain’s OMNI Music Competition, young performers age 7 to 17 who play the piano or a string or wind instrument are encouraged to submit a video recording of themselves performing a musical piece of their choosing. The full range of talent will be available for all to see when the competition’s first stage is webcast on April 22, 23 and 24.

Thirty finalists will then be selected to take part in the second stage of the competition, to be held in person at Montreal’s Chapelle historique du Bon-Pasteur.

The OMNI Competition gives young musicians the opportunity to excel and grow by taking part in a rewarding challenge with the potential to influence their musical development. In a spirit of openness and sharing, the Competition aims to boost young musicians early in their training, whatever their level of learning.

### To take part

To enter, participants have to submit a video recording of their musical performance by **March 21, 2022**. For complete details, visit the OM website!



### Many prizes to win

Due to the generosity of its partners, the 2022 OMNI Competition will award more than \$17,000 in scholarships.

Official Partner



In collaboration with



The Orchestre thanks François Schubert, sponsor of the OMNI Music Competition, for his assistance in making this initiative a reality.



We warmly thank all who have chosen to support the Orchestre Métropolitain during these unprecedented times.

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\*\* The Beaulieu-Saucier Foundation is proud to support the Orchestre Métropolitain's excellence by sponsoring the concertmaster.  
<sup>A</sup> Multi-year gift. Through their donation of \$2.5 million over ten years, Mmes. Desmarais are contributing to the artistic development of the OM and its conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin.  
<sup>P</sup> Gift dedicated to a specific projet.







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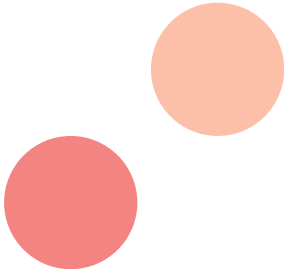
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Its early days and love affair with music



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Always read and follow the label. HALLS for the temporary relief of sore throat, cough and nasal congestion.





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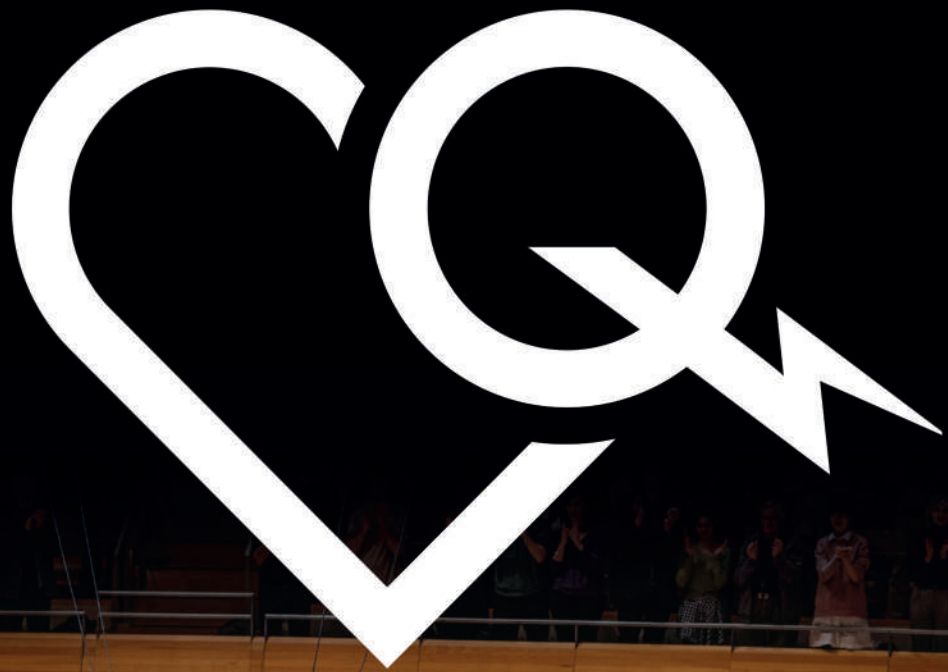
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