

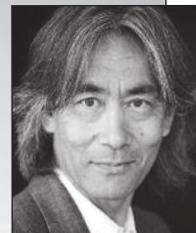
MONTRÉAL SPRING HOLIDAY

Opera, Ballet, Concerts

Thursday, May 24th through Sunday, May 27th



La Maison Symphonique



Kent Nagano,
Music Director,
Montréal
Symphony

“Montréal is Canada’s most romantic metropolis, an island city that seems to favor grace and elegance over order and even prosperity; a city full of music, art and ‘joie de vivre’.” Fodor

“Under Kent Nagano, the fragments came across as a cogent and riveting entity... Things are good again in the Montréal Symphony.” Anthony Tommasini, NY Times

Montréal’s new concert hall, **La Maison Symphonique**: *“The music travels with a natural joy in this elegant wood enclosure and the proximity with the orchestra is quite staggering.”* Cyberpresse Inc.

Ismael Jordi: *“A fine Alfredo in every way, from the crowd-pleasing ‘Brindisi’ to the exquisite shading he brought to ‘Un di felice’ and ‘Parigi, o cara’.”*

Seen & Heard Int’l, review of Covent Garden’s ‘Traviata’

Marie-Eve Munger: *“The Canadian soprano’s honeyed voice soared through the aria from Bernstein’s ‘Candide’... She stole the show.”* The Washington Post



Marie-Eve Munger

Salle Bourgie: *“With high-quality acoustics and exceptional décor that incorporates 20 Tiffany stained glass windows, the hall’s dimensions are ideal for chamber music.”*

Trip Advisor

The Labèque Sisters: *“Perhaps the greatest four-hand piano performers out there, or maybe even ever...”* Midwest Record Review



Ismael Jordi

“Creative, innovative and bold, the works produced by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens have been wowing audiences for more than 60 years.” GrandsBallets.com

After a several-year hiatus, we are eager to return in May to Québec’s cultural capital of **Montréal** – “one of the hemisphere’s most cosmopolitan cities” (*NY Times*). We have carefully selected an ideal balance of four performances which reflect the taste of this sophisticated French-speaking city. Mid-May should provide comfortable spring weather at a time when Montréal residents start to enjoy the city’s many cafés with ‘plein air’ outdoor tables.

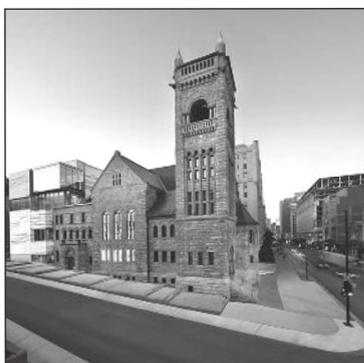
First, the adventurous **L’Opéra de Montréal** will mount a new staging of Charles Gounod’s lyrical version of **Roméo et Juliette**, a favorite romantic work of the 19th century French repertoire. On our previous visit, the company’s outstanding production of Kevin Puts’ Pulitzer Prize-winning **Silent Night** proved a unanimous hit with our Tour members.

Second, the **Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal** ranks with the world’s leading orchestras and is justifiably proud of its dazzling new home, inaugurated in 2011. The spring season will be highlighted by a **Beethoven Festival** encompassing all nine of his ground-breaking symphonies. Our Sunday afternoon program will include both *Symphony No. 4* and *Symphony No. 5*, with Music Director **Kent Nagano** on the podium.

We are also pleased to include a chamber concert in yet another new venue, the intimate **Salle Bourgie**. During a busy season of many performances, we have selected an evening of duo-piano virtuosity, when the acclaimed French **Labèque Sisters** (Katia and Marielle) will offer a program of Stravinsky, Debussy and Philip Glass. (This beautiful small theatre is only a short walk from our hotel.)

In addition to opera and concerts, Montréal has become a thriving center for ballet and modern dance. Our fourth performance will be an opportunity to experience the renowned **Grands Ballets Canadiens**. Their full-length program is entitled *Vendetta* and will be based on stories of the Italian Mafia.

Also planned is a morning visit to the imposing **Musée des Beaux-Arts**, Montréal’s principal showcase of Canadian and



La Bourgie Hall

enjoying an optimum location on Rue de la Montagne within the city's principal shopping district and near rue Sherbrooke's cultural institutions. **La Société Bistro** offers traditional French cuisine under a breathtaking stained-glass ceiling; and the **Lux Lounge** is convenient for lighter fare before or after our evening performances. The Vogue also offers a fully-equipped fitness center.

Early Thursday evening, May 24th, a **cocktail reception** in a private entertainment suite of the hotel will provide an opportunity to meet other members of the Tour.

At 8:00 pm on Thursday, our first performance will be the **Grands Ballets Canadiens** at the **Theatre Maisonneuve**. "Determined to focus on creativity, both in its approach to the great classics and through the new works it brings audiences today, Les Grands Ballets takes pride in offering spectators the opportunity to be moved." (www.grandsballets.com). Their innovative full-length program this evening is entitled *Vendetta: Storie de Mafia*, choreographed by the Belgian-Colombian dancer **Annabelle Lopez Ochoa**. "This action-filled piece will bring you into the underworld of gangsters and feuding families, and will come with all the exciting twists that make for a thrilling night at the ballet."



Katia and Marielle Labèque

and North American fine and decorative arts, ancient treasures from the Near East and Asia, and an unusual range of Native American and Inuit artifacts.

At 7:30 pm on Friday evening, we will walk to the intimate **Salle Bourgie** for a **Duo Piano Recital** by the **Labèque Sisters**. Born in 1950 and 1952 in Bayonne on the coast of France, Katia and Marielle Labèque are renowned for their joint appearances throughout the world. A former Neo-Romanesque church was "restored and transformed to become Bourgie Hall, a 444-seat concert venue with high-quality acoustics and exceptional décor that incorporates 20 remarkable Tiffany stained glass windows." (www.mbam.qc.ca). The Labèques' unusual program will include Igor Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* and works by Claude Debussy and Philip Glass.

European masters. For independent sight-seeing and advantageous shopping while the U.S. dollar remains higher than the Canadian dollar, our choice of the deluxe **Leow's Hotel Vogue** hotel will prove to be especially convenient, within comfortable walking distance of the Museum and the Bourgie.

Accommodations for **four nights** at **Leow's Hotel Vogue**, a luxury property



Les Grands Ballets Canadiens

Friday morning, May 25th, we will visit the **Musée des Beaux-Arts**, on rue Sherbrooke a few minutes' walk from our hotel. The glittering new *Pavilion* was designed by the Israeli-Canadian architect Moshe Safdie. Founded in 1860, the two adjoining buildings contain a large collection of European

Saturday the 26th and Sunday morning the 27th are left free during the day for independent activities. Most of the city's leading stores and boutiques are within walking distance of the Vogue. The center of the city is characterized by the contrast of contemporary glass office towers and several important churches. Strolling along rue Sherbrooke yields the opportunity to browse through chic boutiques and to sample many ethnic restaurants. The rue St. Denis and adjacent Latin Quarter attract Francophiles from all over the world, while the bohemian atmosphere of the rue Prince Arthur is a haven for students and young professionals. The **Place des Arts** theater complex – where we will attend the Opéra, the Symphony and the Ballet – is reminiscent of New York's Lincoln Center. Major landmarks throughout the city include the neo-Gothic **Basilique Notre Dame**, the **Sulpician Seminary** (the city's oldest building), and **McGill University** (on a spacious campus near rue Sherbrooke). **Vieux-Montréal (Old Montréal)** is comprised of atmospheric narrow streets which converge on the outdoor cafes of Place Jacques-Cartier on the bank of the St. Lawrence River nearest to Mount Royal.

Early Saturday evening, a pre-opera dinner will be arranged at **Il Cortile** on rue Sherbrooke, where the Italian menus are exceptional.

At 8:00 pm on Saturday evening, we will attend the **Opéra de Montréal's** new production of Charles Gounod's **Roméo et Juliette**. "Gounod's opera has been the greatest popular success of the many founded upon Shakespeare's play. The four love duets in the work have drawn particular praise." (*New Grove Dictionary of Opera*). Heading tonight's cast in the

title roles are the Canadian soprano **Marie-Eve Munger** and the Spanish tenor **Ismael Jordi** as Shakespeare's ill-fated lovers. The conductor is **Giuliano Carella**, and the director is the sought-after Canadian, **Tom Diamond**. (*Remaining cast TBA*). *Sung in French with English and French titles.*

On Sunday afternoon, May 27th, we will experience the ambience of the **Maison Symphonique de Montréal**, inaugurated on September 7th, 2011, as the new home of the **Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal** at 1600 Saint-Urbain Street. "The hall is distinguished among other elements by its relatively narrow, high and long straight geometry with audience seating on multiple balcony levels surrounding the performers. These geometric features have proven to deliver a superior acoustic environment and create an intimate relationship between performers and audience." (www.osm.ca) We are fortunate that Music Director **Kent Nagano** will be on the podium for our final performance, which will offer Ludwig von Beethoven's *Symphony No. 4* and *Symphony No. 5*. The pairing of these two works will be a high point of the **Beethoven Festival** which Maestro Nagano has scheduled for next spring.

Independent departures should be on Monday morning, May 28th.

IMPORTANT: *Please be advised that PASSPORTS are required for entry into Canada and departure from Montréal's Airport.*

Montréal Spring Holiday

Price per person, based on double occupancy	\$ 2,980
Single room supplement	\$ 615

Airfare NOT included.