

# COMPOSERS PAID TO CREATE NEW CANADIAN OPERAS WHILE STUCK AT HOME

Women Opera Creator Winners Announced for \$50,000 Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes

Montreal, Quebec, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



The 2020-2021 winners for the second edition of the **\$50,000 Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes** announced today in Montreal will create three new original Canadian operas to be premiered 2021, in a staged co-production with Toronto's award-winning independent opera company Opera 5, Montreal's Opera McGill, Société de musique contemporaine du Québec (SMCQ), and Kingston's Queen's University Dan School of Music. Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes is awarded to teams of emerging Canadian women-identifying opera composers and librettists who demonstrate extraordinary promise in opera creation.

**Winners 2020-2021 Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes** (winner details on following page)

Anna Pidgorna, composer (New Westminster BC) and Maria Reva, librettist (New Westminster BC)

Parisa Sabet, composer (Toronto) and Nika Khanjani, librettist (Montreal)

Sonia Paço-Rocchia, composer (Laurentides QC) and Marie-Ève Bouchard, librettist (Saint-Jérôme QC)

The prizes will be presented on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 6:00 pm, at the [Mécénat Musica](#) Gala, Chapelle historique du Bon Pasteur.

## **ABOUT MÉCÉNAT MUSICA PRIX 3 FEMMES**

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes is an initiative by Montreal's Musique 3 Femmes and Mécénat Musica dedicated to developing new operas by emerging women-identifying Canadian creators. The biennial award supports emerging composers and librettists through seed funding for new works, mentorship with industry professionals, travel stipends, musical & staging workshops for the creations, and over 200 hours of rehearsal and development time with professional musicians. The 2020-21 jury comprised of composers Laura Kaminsky and Dean Burry, conductor Véronique Lacroix (ECM+), conductor and director Patrick Hansen (Opera McGill), and artistic director Jessica Derventzis (Opera 5).

## **ABOUT MUSIQUE 3 FEMMES**

Musique 3 Femmes is a non-profit ensemble which is fostering the next generation of women-identifying opera creators in Canada. Founded in 2018 by soprano Suzanne Rigden, mezzo-soprano Kristin Hoff and pianist Jennifer Szeto, Musique 3 Femmes recognizes the need for better representation of women's voices in the creative leadership of opera. In 2020, Musique 3 Femmes welcomes Toronto-based soprano Rachel Krehm.

## **ABOUT MÉCÉNAT MUSICA**

Mécénat Musica is a cultural program created by donors for donors. Mécénat Musica encourages individuals to make an in-perpetuity donation of \$25,000 to a cultural organization important to them, and encourages philanthropic families to match these individuals' donations with donations of \$250,000 or \$2,500,000. This is a major shift in cultural philanthropy.

Inquiries: Jennifer Szeto  
(587) 891-5366  
[jennifer@musique3femmes.com](mailto:jennifer@musique3femmes.com)

Mécénat Musica  
[mecenatmusica@gmail.com](mailto:mecenatmusica@gmail.com)

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## Winners of the 2020-2021 Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes

**Anna Pidgorna, composer** (New Westminster, BC) and **Maria Reva, librettist** (New Westminster, British Columbia)

**ANNA PIDGORNA** is a Ukrainian-Canadian composer, vocalist and multi-media artist who combines sound, visual arts, writing and carpentry to create works that are dramatic and picturesque. She works extensively with Ukrainian folk singing, incorporating elements of this style in her works. With an enduring love for the outdoors, Pidgorna draws inspiration from the nature, often imitating birds and animals. Her collaborators and commissioners include Toronto's Soundstreams, 21C Festival, New Music Concerts, Gryphon Trio, Thin Edge New Music Collective, Michael Bridge, Rachel Mercer; Montreal's Ensemble Paramirabo, Katelyn Clark, Marina Thibeault; Vancouver's Standing Wave; Edmonton's Now Hear This Festival, UltraViolet Ensemble; New York's Sandbox Percussion, Ensemble Mise-En; Los Angeles' Delirium Musicum, Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra; Alaska's Wild Shore Festival; Boston's Ludovico Ensemble, Trio Klaritas; Gamin (Korea/NYC) and the Irish Language Art Song Project. She is a recipient of two SOCAN Foundation Awards and represented Canada at the ISCM World New Music Days in Vienna. Pidgorna holds a PhD from Princeton University, a MMus from University of Calgary, and a BA from Mount Allison University. She was born in Ukraine and immigrated to Canada at age 12, where she now makes her home in New Westminster, BC.

**MARIA REVA** writes fiction and libretti. Her linked story collection, *Good Citizens Need Not Fear*, is forthcoming in spring 2020 from Doubleday (US), Virago (UK), and Knopf Canada as part of its New Face of Fiction program. Maria's stories have appeared in *The Atlantic*, *McSweeney's*, *Granta*, *The Journey Prize Stories*, *The Best American Short Stories*, and elsewhere. She won the Writers' Trust of Canada's RBC Bronwen Wallace Award in 2018 and a National Magazine Award in 2019. Her musical collaborations include an opera libretto for ERATO Ensemble, texts for Vancouver International Song Institute's Art Song Lab, and a script for City Opera Vancouver. In 2017, musica intima vocal ensemble premiered *Uta's Escape*, a commission by composer Jennifer Butler based on one of Maria's stories. Current collaborations include a song cycle with composer Shelley Marwood about modern dating and an opera with composer Anna Pidgorna commissioned by Ad Astra Music Festival (Russell, Kansas). Maria was born in Ukraine and grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia. She received her MFA in fiction and playwriting from the Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas.

**Parisa Sabet, composer** (Toronto) and **Nika Khanjani, librettist** (Montreal)

**PARISA SABET** is an Iranian-Canadian composer praised by the Chicago Live Music Examiner as "a 21<sup>st</sup> century composer on the rise". She integrates unique elements of Eastern and Western musical languages to create a sonic world that is all at once rich, layered, lyrical, and accessible. Her works have been performed across North America, Europe, and Asia, with a repertory which includes works for solo instruments, orchestra, as well as sound design and original film scores. Parisa is a two-time recipient of the Theodoros Mirkopoulos Fellowship in Composition, and the Irene R. Miller and Anoush Khoshkish Fellowship in Music from University of Toronto where she completed her DMA in music composition under the supervision of Christos Hatzis. In 2019, she was awarded the 2019 Tecumesh Sherman Rogers Graduating Award, given to a graduating student deemed to have the greatest potential for making an important contribution to the field of music. [www.parisasabet.com](http://www.parisasabet.com)

**NIKA KHANJANI** is an Iranian-Canadian librettist, multidisciplinary writer and storyteller, formally trained in filmmaking, and working in various platforms of text and performance. Her experience as an immigrant (from Iran to the US) and as an expat (from the US to Canada) informs her point of view from which to see and make connections, but it is her disposition as a humanist that drives her to find the interpersonal micro-moments that connect us to one another in an increasingly frenetic world. As a storyteller, she considers the form of each story to determine whether it would be best served as a written text, as moving image and sound, or a staged performance. Her inspiration comes from human resilience, our potential to heal from adversity, and the gorgeous ways in which people move forward to show love to one another. Her film credits include *Free World Pens* (2015), *Iran to Texas* (2011), *Texas, My Brother, and Me* (2009), *Current* (2007), *Copyright* (2006), and *Montreal spring, shrouded in mist* (2012). Khanjani studied English Literature at University of Texas and holds an MFA in Film Production from Concordia University.

**Sonia Paço-Rocchia, composer** (Laurentides, Québec) and **Marie-Ève Bouchard, librettist** (Saint-Jérôme, Québec)

**SONIA PAÇO-ROCCHIA** has a diverse practice ranging from composition to interactive kinetic sound installations through web art and improvisation. Visual and theatrical aspects are an integral part of her work, just as sound research is at its heart, perceived in her broadening of instruments' sound palettes, as well as in the use of unusual, discovered and invented instruments. Being herself a professional coder, she builds her own interfaces, software programs for real-time sound processing, and instruments. A talented improviser, she plays as a soloist and in small ensembles: non-conventional and invented instruments, the voice, bassoon, all in real-time processing. She is an improvising bassoonist with the London Improviser Orchestra and member of the duo VibraLib (multiple trumpets with electro-acoustics and real-time processing), as well as the duo ZzCc (robots, augmented piano and real-time processing). She particularly enjoys collaborations and has composed music for dance, theatre and visual art. Her works have been presented in hundreds of events across Europe, North America and Asia. In 2019, she participated in 7 residencies (Quebec, Meaford, South River, Laval, Val David, Finland, Yukon) and completed three commissions, including *Ode au Métal* for Quasar, which received 2 Opus Prizes in 2020. She is also carrying out an interactive sound installation project inside a van, which will be touring this summer 2020.

**MARIE-ÈVE BOUCHARD (MEB)** composed her first poem while coming home from primary school in her suburb of Loretteville, Québec, and she hurried to write it down in her unicorn-shaped notebook. She then turned to the violin, while continuing to draw and to write often in her variously shaped notebooks. Later, being irresistibly lured toward music history, the silence and smell of libraries, she pursued studies in musicology (Laval University), all the while taking delicious detours into literary creation (poetry, songwriting). MEB has produced three recordings (Meb esp, *Dehors* and *Spirits & Saints*) and she published several zines before eventually publishing her first collection entitled *Aria de Laine* (Moult Editions). Every day she tries to create something that she shares at [www.chezmeb.com](http://www.chezmeb.com). With what remains of her time, MEB teaches music history and songwriting at *Cégep de Saint-Laurent* and writes lyrics for Under Electric Light.

# MUSIQUE 3 FEMMES



**Kristin Hoff, mezzo-soprano**, is noted for her “appealing clarity and emotional heft” (New York Times) and “extraordinary vocal range” (Westfaelische Nachrichten). A versatile performer with a diverse repertoire and commitment to new music, Kristin is a graduate of Vancouver Opera’s Yulanda M. Faris Program, where her debut as Tebaldo in *Don Carlo* was praised as “absolutely charming in voice and person”. Other credits include Dryade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the prestigious Tanglewood Music Festival and the title role in *Carmen* for Jeunesses Musicales du Canada. Equally at home on the concert stage, Kristin made her Carnegie Hall debut with the MET Chamber Ensemble in Elliot Carter’s *Syringa* as part of the composer’s centennial celebration, conducted by James Levine, which garnered praise for her “searing commitment and impressive vocal command” (The Republican). Other engagements include the Boston Pops Symphony Orchestra, Tanglewood Symphony Orchestra, Mark Morris Dance Company, Chants Libres, Ensemble Caprice, Caramoor Festival, New York Festival of Song. An avid recitalist, Kristin has been featured with the Gallery Players of Niagara, Ottawa’s Ponticello Concerts, as well as in a concert tour across China with Jeunesses Ambassadeurs Lyriques. Highlights in new works include *One to One to One* by Luna Pearl Woolf (world premiere), *White Wines* by Dorothy Chang (world premiere), Claude Vivier’s *Kopernikus*, and *Vision* by Jose Evangelista with Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and SMCQ. Her critically acclaimed interpretation of Ana Sokolovic’s *Love Songs*, a 50-minute opera for unaccompanied solo female voice, has been seen in 8 different Canadian cities in a staging co-developed by Fides Krucker, including at Lanaudiere Festival and Montreal’s Salle Bourgie.

**Jennifer Szeto, pianist**, “who was impressive in the recital... continued to show why she’s one of the most promising of young collaborative pianists in Canada” (Scena Musicale). Praised for her “rock-solid rhythm and a great variety of color” (Bachtrack) and “amazing versatility” (Opera Ramblings), Jennifer is a graduate of the prestigious San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship, Merola Opera Program, Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio, and the Atelier Lyrique of Opéra de Montréal. This year, she served as head coach for George Benjamin’s *Written on Skin* at Opéra de Montréal, assistant conductor to Judith Yan for John Estacio’s *Ours* at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa with Opera on the Avalon, and music directs the world premiere of Laurence Jobidon and Pascale St-Onge’s *L’hiver attend beaucoup de moi* at Théâtre Espace GO with the Atelier Lyrique. She is a staff coach at Opera McGill, Highlands Opera Studio, and in April 2020, she appears in recital with mezzo-soprano Rihab Chaieb for Société d’art vocal Montréal. In 2018-2019, she served as an Assistant Conductor for Opera on the Avalon, Head Coach for Banff Centre for the Arts as part of “Opera in the 21st Century”, staff coach for University of Ottawa, and has held positions with Calgary Opera, International Vocal Arts Institute (Tel Aviv, Montreal), Cowtown Opera, MYOpera, and Halifax Summer Opera Festival. She holds a M.Mus in Piano Accompaniment from McGill, a B.Mus from University of Toronto, and received additional training from SongFest and Franz Schubert Institut in Baden-bei-Wien, Austria.

**Rachel Krehm, soprano**, is a multi-faceted artist with credits as a performer, producer, writer, and co-founder and General Director of award-winning independent opera company Opera 5. Recent performance highlights include a programme of Richard Strauss with the Kingston Symphony, followed by the *Vier Letzte Lieder* (Four Last Songs) with the Canzona Chamber Players Orchestra, the title role of Ariadne in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Highlands Opera Studio, and a principal role in Opera 5’s Dora Award-nominated *Open Chambers: Hindemith & Shostakovich*. She has previously performed with Tapestry Opera, Kitchener-Waterloo Orchestra, Kingston Chamber Choir, and the Dr. Shirley Linzy Young Artists Orchestra of Las Vegas. Upcoming, Rachel will be seen as Miss Jessel in Opera 5’s production of Britten’s *The Turn of the Screw*. Rachel is the creator and co-writer of an operatic performance for young audiences: *Tenors, Trumpets and La Traviata*, which was seen with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony and the Kingston Symphony Orchestra. She is a featured actor in the popular web-series, *Opera Cheats*, and is a principal member of Canada’s only opera comedy/improv team - *Whose Opera is it Anyway*. As an advocate for Canadian composers and new works, Rachel has produced world premieres of two Canadian operas with Opera 5 - *The Masque of the Red Death* by Cecilia Livingston and *Storybook* by Darren Russo, which won the 2015 SOCAN Foundation’s John Weinzweig Grand Prize. In 2018, she commissioned Vancouver composer Ryan Trew’s orchestral song cycle, *Come Closer*, which featured poetry by her late sister Elizabeth Krehm and was subsequently premiered by Rachel and the Canzona Chamber Players Orchestra.

# Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes

Compositrices et librettistes émergentes / Emerging female composers and librettists

## Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes 50 000 \$

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes est consacré au développement de nouveaux opéras créés par des femmes canadiennes et est un prix remis à trois équipes de compositrices et librettistes émergentes d'opéra au Canada témoignant de perspectives d'avenir extraordinaires dans la création d'opéra. Trois prix sont attribués par un jury international aux équipes pour des compositions originales en anglais, français et une œuvre juive.

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes est le seul prix au Canada où une combinaison de tous ces éléments est encouragée financièrement :

- Créatrices
- Artistes émergentes
- Composition
- L'écriture libretto
- Atelier
- Performance

La valeur du Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes s'élève à 50 000 \$ :

- 15 000 \$ en espèces - 3 compositrices 5 000 \$ chacun
- 7 500 \$ en espèces - 3 librettistes 2 500 \$ chacun
- 2 500 \$ en bourses de voyage pour l'atelier de Montréal
- 25 000 \$ aux musiciens pour l'atelier, les répétitions, les représentations et la direction artistique

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes est l'initiative de Musique 3 Femmes de Montréal et de l'Ensemble vocal Arts-Québec dont ses donateurs fournissent au prix 5 000 \$ de chaque don de 25 000 \$ à Mécénat Vocal.

Les cinq opéras Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes 2018-2019 ont été vus dans des performances et des productions par des compagnies d'opéra à travers le Canada : l'Opéra de Montréal, Canadian Opera Company's Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre in Toronto, Tapestry Opera, Opera.ca's Changing Worlds Summit, et dans le cadre de résidences éducatives d'opéra aux universités McGill, Queen's, Mount Allison, Ottawa et Calgary.

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes 2020-2021 incluent des ateliers avec les Universités McGill et Queens, le mentorat de la célèbre compositrice Luna Pearl Woolf et les coproductions avec l'Opéra 5, l'Opéra McGill, la Société de musique contemporaine du Québec et l'École de musique DAN de l'Université Queen's.

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Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes is dedicated to developing new operas by Canadian women and is a prize for three teams of emerging woman-identified opera composers and librettists in Canada who demonstrate extraordinary promise in opera creation. Three prizes are awarded by an international jury to teams for original opera compositions in English, French, and a Jewish work.

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes is the only prize in Canada where a combination of all these elements is encouraged financially:

- Female creators
- Emerging artists
- Composition
- Libretto Writing
- Workshop
- Performance

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes is a total of \$50,000 \$ in cash:

- \$15,000 in cash – 3 composers \$5,000 each
- \$ 7,500 in cash – 3 librettists \$2,500 each
- \$ 2,500 in travel stipends to/from Montreal workshop
- \$25,000 to musicians for workshop, rehearsals, performances and artistic direction of the works

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes is the initiative of Montreal-based Musique 3 Femmes and Ensemble vocal Arts-Québec whose donors provide the prize with \$5,000 from each \$25,000 donation to Mécénat Vocal.

The five Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes 2018-2019 operas were seen in performance and productions by opera companies across Canada, including l'Opéra de Montréal, Canadian Opera Company's Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre in Toronto, Tapestry Opera (Canada's leading producer of new operas), Opera.ca's Changing Worlds Summit, and as part of opera educational residencies at the Universities of McGill, Queens, Mount Allison, Ottawa and Calgary.

Mécénat Musica Prix 3 Femmes 2020-2021 prizes include opera workshops with the Universities of McGill and Queen's, mentorship from acclaimed opera composer Luna Pearl Woolf and a co-production with Toronto's award-winning Opera 5, Opera McGill, Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, and Queen's University DAN School of Music.

# Mécénat Musica

## In perpetuity

Mécénat Musica is a cultural program by donors for donors. Mécénat Musica encourages individuals to make an **in-perpetuity** donation of \$25,000 to a cultural organization that is important to them, and encourages families to match these individuals' donations with donations of \$250,000 or \$2,500,000.

## Mécénat Individual \$25,000

An individual's net cost of a \$25,000 cash donation after personal tax credits is \$6,750<sup>B</sup> (or \$5,425<sup>B</sup>) and is due, with other credits, to an additional Revenue Quebec tax credit for one large cultural donation, which can only be claimed by the individual **once in his or her lifetime, up to December 31, 2022.**

Also, the net cost to an individual of a \$25,000 donation of public company shares (with large non-realized gains) can be as low as \$7,521<sup>C</sup> and can be done by the donor multiple times.

This donation of \$25,000 allows the cultural organization of your choice<sup>D</sup> **to increase the capital to up to ~\$75,000 – up to 11 times your after-tax cost** of \$6,750<sup>B</sup> (or \$5,425<sup>B</sup>), by applying for matching grants from Canadian Heritage and/or le Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec.

[Mécénat Musica Video.](#)

This money is deposited into the cultural organization of your choice's in-perpetuity fund with the Foundation of Greater Montreal (FGM), Fondation Québec Philanthrope (FQP) or Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal (JCF).

Your donation is a gesture like no other that enhances culture today and for generations to come.

**HOW TO PARTICIPATE:** Please send a check today for \$25,000 payable to the Mécénat Musica cultural organization of your choice. Thank you!

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## Mécénat Family \$250,000

A family donation of \$250,000<sup>E</sup> can have an after-tax cost as low as \$25,000<sup>F</sup>, and will match donations of \$25,000+ from individuals and other families for a total of \$500,000.

This \$500,000 allows the admissible cultural organization of your choice<sup>D</sup> to increase the capital to up to ~\$1,500,000 with government matching. This money is deposited into the cultural organization's in-perpetuity fund with either FGM, FQP or JCF. [Mécénat Family Video](#)

## Mécénat \$2,500,000

A donation of \$2,500,000<sup>E</sup> can have an after-tax cost as low as \$250,000<sup>F</sup>, and will match donations from individuals of \$25,000+ and families of \$250,000+ for a total of \$5,000,000.

This \$5,000,000 can increase the capital to up to ~\$12,500,000 with government matching, resulting in capital and income of up to ~\$25,000,000<sup>A</sup> over the next 25 years for the cultural organization(s) of your choice<sup>D</sup>.

[Fondation du Grand Montréal](#) (FGM):

Hélène Latreille, Delegate of President & CEO, Philanthropic Partnerships  
[helene.latreille@fgmtl.org](mailto:helene.latreille@fgmtl.org) (514) 866-0808 x106

[Fondation Québec Philanthrope](#) (FQP):

Karen Bouchard, Executive Director  
[kbouchard@quebecphilanthrope.org](mailto:kbouchard@quebecphilanthrope.org) 418-521-6664 x222

[Jewish Community Foundation of Montreal](#) (JCF):

Kathy Assayag, Executive Director  
[kathy.assayag@jcfmontreal.org](mailto:kathy.assayag@jcfmontreal.org) (514) 345-6414 x3368

<sup>B</sup> After tax cost assumes the individual is a Quebec resident and has sufficient taxable income to absorb the donation tax credits.

For individuals with taxable incomes over \$225,000, the net cost of the once in a lifetime large cultural donation of \$25,000 can be \$5,425.

See page 6 Tax Calculator for further details. Individuals should seek independent tax advice for their own particular situation.

<sup>C</sup> See page 7 "Individual's Donation of Shares \$25,000". <sup>D</sup> See page 11 Mécénat Organizations Criteria.

<sup>E</sup> Donation from an individual, a couple or their family, investment company, foundation or donor advised fund.

<sup>F</sup> After tax cost is based on Assumptions in chart "Donation of Public Company Shares by Quebec resident Corporations & Shareholders" on page 7.