



Orchestre symphonique
de Trois-Rivières



News release for immediate release



Jean-Claude Picard

**Appointed as
Artistic Director and Principal Conductor
of the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières**

Trois-Rivières, February 8th 2019 – After an extensive selection process, the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières is proud to announce the appointment of maestro Jean-Claude Picard as artistic director and principal conductor. The former assistant conductor, and later associate conductor, of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, has since led an impressive career both in Europe and Canada. Maestro Picard will begin his four-year term by developing the 2019-2020 programming, to be revealed next May, and he will take the helm of the OSTR in the fall of 2019.

Last September, a selection committee was struck to assess the applications of talented orchestra conductors. “Jean-Claude’s application clearly stood out, particularly in a rehearsal with the OSTR which showcased his many talents as a leader and a communicator and his inspiring musical vision. Our musicians affirmed that he knows how to make music speak, and that he inspired them to give their best” stated Natalie Rousseau, general director of the OSTR.

Upon his appointment, Jean-Claude Picard said “It is with great pleasure that I take up the duties of artistic director of the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières. The OSTR is an excellent orchestra made up of exceptional musicians; I was impressed by its qualities of sensitivity and responsiveness and its superb sonority. Having spent the greatest part of my career in Europe, I am deeply moved by this opportunity to make an artistic contribution here at home in Quebec, with this magnificent orchestra. I look forward to assuming my new position and sharing my passion with the audiences of Trois-Rivières!”

An accomplished flautist, Jean-Claude Picard later turned to orchestral conducting which he has practised since 2007. After graduating from the Conservatoire supérieur in Geneva, he studied with Kurt Masur, Neeme Järvi and David Zinman. He is well-respected and known for his elegant conducting style, his openness and the collaborative atmosphere that he fosters in orchestras, as well as for his mastery of a vast repertoire of symphonic music and music for ballet.

This young 37 year-old conductor is the third artistic director of the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières, following in the footsteps of Jacques Lacombe (2006-2018) and Gilles Bellemare (1978-2005).

JEAN-CLAUDE PICARD

"Conducted by Jean-Claude Picard, the sound of the Quebec Symphony Orchestra, of sublime depth, seemed to gain in flexibility and intensity. Elegant and lively, the conductor makes us appreciate all the subtleties, dramatic tension and verve of the score. Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 5 ended the concert on a masterful note." - Le Soleil, November 2017

"Five stars? Oh yes; and then some. What a stonker of a concert the RSNO and assistant conductor Jean-Claude Picard turned out on Saturday. It took me back to square one; right back to where I started with my consuming passion for live music." - The Herald, February 2015

Jean-Claude Picard is widely regarded as a communicative and engaging conductor by fellow artists, critics and audiences alike.

Building a strong reputation as a collaborative and dedicated conductor, his performances are known to be elegant, dynamic and carefully crafted, gaining appreciation and interest from both experienced and new audiences, and as a result he returns regularly to many of the orchestras he has conducted so far, both in Europe and in North America.

Jean-Claude's background as a flautist has given him invaluable experience from inside the orchestra and he has performed internationally with orchestras ranging from the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra to l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and Les Violons du Roy.

In his native Canada he conducts orchestras such as the Montreal Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Quebec Symphony, Symphony Nova Scotia, National Arts Centre and Victoria Symphony as well as Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and I Musici.

In Europe, Jean-Claude has enjoyed successful return visits to the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Ballet, Manchester Camerata, a critically acclaimed debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Zürich Tonhalle Orchestra, Geneva Chamber Orchestra, Porto Symphony Orchestra Casa da Música, Leipzig Symphony, Pärnu City Orchestra and Red Note Ensemble.

In 2015, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra announced Jean-Claude's promotion to the position of Associate Conductor, the first in the modern history of the organisation, reflecting the detailed quality

of his work and the meaningful relationship with the members of the orchestra built during his tenure as Assistant Conductor.

Over the last few years, he has formed a close relationship with the Scottish Ballet where he will now return for a fifth time to conduct several productions including Prokofiev's "Cinderella" (Hampson). Previously, the company saw great success and critical acclaim touring a Stravinsky double bill featuring Hampson's *Le Sacre du printemps* and MacMillan's *Le Baiser de la fée* with Jean-Claude as conductor.

Composers closest to Jean-Claude's heart include Nielsen, Stravinsky, Sibelius, Prokofiev, Ravel, Beethoven and Debussy. Equally at ease with contemporary music, he has premiered and recorded works by Canadian and British composers such as Kelly-Marie Murphy, Ned Bigham, Rory Boyle and Oliver Searle, and collaborated closely with Brett Dean during the first edition of the RSNO's Composers' Hub.

The 2018/19 season sees Jean-Claude return to Symphony Nova Scotia, Victoria Symphony, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, a world premiere at the Edinburgh International Festival with Scottish Ballet as well as a national tour, a debut with the Geneva Chamber Orchestra, with *I Musici*, and a North American premiere and tour with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens where he will conduct both Les Grands Ballets Canadiens Orchestra and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

ORCHESTRE SYMPHONIQUE DE TROIS-RIVIÈRES

Founded in 1978, the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières is now led by conductor Jean-Claude Picard. With its 54 professional musicians, the OSTR is distinguished by the quality of its programming, which gives their place to the important masterpieces of the grand symphonic repertoire, to creations and to renowned soloists, in addition of developing initiatives for students and young musicians from the region. Recent accolades include the Felix award for Album of the Year - Classical/Vocal, the 2014 Juno for Classical Album of the Year: Vocal or Choral Performance, the Louis-Philippe-Poisson Arts de la scène award (2014), the prix Opus Concert de l'année – régions, for two consecutive years (2012 and 2013), the Initiative of the Year Award (2013) and two Gold Records.

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For additional information, contact the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières at 819 373-5340. You can also visit the website of the OSTR at www.ostr.ca, as well as its Facebook and Instagram pages (@OSTRconcerts) as well as its YouTube channel (OSTRofficiel).

Information : Julie Leblanc, Communications Director
819 373-5340 ext. 4 • communications@ostr.ca