



MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS FESTIVAL

9th edition
FEBRUARY 21 TO MARCH 2, 2008



Sun
Life Financial
PERFORMING ARTS

News Release
For immediate distribution

Sun Life Financial Performing Arts Program

Margie Gillis, Michel Fugain, *HOUDINI*, Eva Yerbabuena Ballet Flamenco, Bobby McFerrin, the Mozart Piano Quartet, The Spaghetti Western Orchestra, Julia Migenes, Jane Birkin, *Relative Good* ...

The 9th MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS Festival: Culture in the Spotlight!

Tickets on sale as of Saturday, November 17, at noon

Montréal, Wednesday, November 14, 2007 — The MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS Festival presents its Sun Life Financial Performing Arts program, putting the spotlight on culture and the arts! From Thursday, February 21 to Sunday, March 2, 2008, the 9th edition of the urban winter event offers up a program that may just melt away a Montréal winter! Featuring performances by international and local artists, surprising shows, original creations, major premières and must-see events, there's something to satisfy every taste and passion! Tickets for shows in the Sun Life Financial Performing Arts program go on sale Saturday, November 17, 2007, at noon. And while you're soaking up all that cultural sustenance, remember that the MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS Festival also serves up the Air France Wine & Dine Experience presented by American Express (unveiling its program on December 12), the wildness of the Montreal All-Nighter, the always festive Celebration of Light and the sportive and social Montreal Downtown & Underground Event (respective programs to be unveiled in early 2008).

Margie Gillis and Eva Yerbabuena, honorary co-presidents of the Sun Life Financial Performing Arts

This year again, two very big-name artists will be serving as honorary co-presidents of the Festival's performing arts segment: Montreal's Margie Gillis, one of the major figures in contemporary dance, and the European flamenco star Eva Yerbabuena.

Eva Yerbabuena Ballet Flamenco, *Santo y Señá* — opening concert

Born in Frankfurt in 1970, she was on the move two weeks later when her parents moved back to their native Granada. And movement—the flamenco—became her raison d'être. After studying under the masters, Mario Maya and Raphael Aguilar, she quickly became one of the style's most brilliant dancers, developing her own style to the extent that she is credited as the only performer capable of reaching the true giddy heights of the form. It's a style rich in emotion, purity, character authenticity and sensuality. With the moving performance from her most recent show, *Santo y Señá*, this major European flamenco star, Eva Yerbabuena, presents her company—12 dancers and musicians—and its unique language and signs that have set it apart with remarkable choreographies presented over the last decade. On Wednesday, February 20, at Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA. Presented by Hydro-Québec in collaboration with Radio-Canada Télévision.

Margie Gillis, *M.Body.7* / *M.Corps.7*— World première

It's a world première dance performance, from the honorary co-president of the MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS artistic program, who also happens to be one of the most celebrated figures on the international contemporary dance scene. In short, three events in one! Renowned for her alluring personality, her style and her incomparable virtuosity, as well as her deeply intuitive rendering of the infinite facets of the human soul, the choreographer has given close to four decades of service to her art. To celebrate her 35th season of excellence, she opens with the *M.Body.7* program; then, solo or accompanied by an all-female troupe (*Gioconda Barbuto, Anik Bissonnette, Holly Bright, Laurence Lemieux, Emily Molnar and Risa Steinberg*), she performs *M.Corps.7*. Sibylline titles that prophesize an evening of surprises! Friday, February 29, at Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA.

The return of Michel Fugain!

Closing the event, we herald the return of the great Michel Fugain, back in Quebec after a ten-year absence to share his greatest hits with us! This icon of French song—more of a showman than ever at age 65—brings his

magnificent voice, the legacy of his massive Big Bazar band, and a timeless songbook featuring a few new chapters. *Je n'aurai pas le temps, Fais comme l'oiseau, Une belle histoire, La fête, Bravo, Monsieur le Monde, Viva la vida...* Songs that haven't aged a day, as contemporary as breaking news... and dressed up to party! With musical direction by Pascal Légitimus. **Sunday, March 2, Théâtre St-Denis 1** (also presented on **Saturday, March 1**). Presented by Sun Life Financial.

Musical theatre and circus arts

HOUDINI, the Musical

An original musical comedy on the life of the first great American popular artist, Harry Houdini. Featuring some of his greatest escapes, this captivating and entertaining portrait spotlights the life of Houdini, from his humble beginnings in Vaudeville to the zenith of his fame and his fierce and highly publicized campaign against mediums and spiritualists, led by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Written and staged by a veteran Montréal creative team, the production features 20 singers, actors and musicians. Music, magic, emotion... and an escape from the ordinary! **From Sunday, February 10 to Sunday, March 2, excluding Fridays, at the Leanor and Alvin Segal Theatre, Segal Center for Performing Arts at the Saidye. A coproduction with the MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS Festival.**

The Spaghetti Western Orchestra

After their enormous success during last summer's Festival International de Jazz de Montréal, **The Spaghetti Western Orchestra** brings its theatrical musical concept back to Théâtre Outremont! Relive your memories of Sergio Leone's iconic Italian westerns as these Aussie multi-instrumentalists ingeniously recreate scenes from the Italian westerns that changed an American film genre, recreating—down to the smallest sonic details—immortal scenes from *Once Upon a Time in the West, For a Few Dollars More, The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, and more. In an evocative setting, the show, both comic and dramatic, stands as a veritable tribute to the greatest of film-score composers, Ennio Morricone, finally singled out for an Honorary Lifetime Achievement Award at the Oscars. Original, unique...and completely crazy! **From Wednesday, February 20 to Saturday, February 23, at Théâtre Outremont.**

Belly of a Drunken Piano: a celebration of Tom Waits, with Stewart D'Arrietta

After a successful nine-month run at New York's Soho Theatre, Australian **Stewart D'Arrietta** arrives in Montréal with ***Belly of a Drunken Piano***, his homage to the life and art of Tom Waits. The audience is plunged into a stunning and unexpected reincarnation of the life and unique musical demi-monde of the legendary American boho songwriter. Come experience the show that floored André Ménard at last year's Edinburgh Fringe! **From Tuesday, February 26 to Saturday, March 1, in the intimate Savoy cabaret, Metropolis.**

FL火SH • (by New Circus Asia)

Martial arts, acrobatics, multimedia and dance, ancestral traditions and the modern world... **FLASH** is all that and more. Onstage, artists engage in death-defying feats of strength and flexibility to a soundtrack of classical Eastern music mixed with the music of urban Asia, and an inspired VJ backdrop. The result is a surprising portrait of contemporary Asia, where the proud voice of youth struggles to make itself heard. **From Tuesday, February 19 to Saturday, March 1 (excluding Sunday, February 24 and Monday, February 25) at the TOHU, la Cité des arts du cirque. In partnership with MusiquePlus.**

Relative Good

A Canadian citizen of Middle Eastern origin lands at JFK airport in New York, in a post-9-11 America where rights have become terrifyingly, arbitrarily flexible, or even invisible. ***Relative Good***, the new play written and directed by Montrealer David Gow, brings ironic, disturbing and very Kafkaesque issues torn from current headlines to the fore, limning our fears and anxieties and the human cost incurred when we judge a man by his name, birthplace or background. **From Tuesday, February 26 to Sunday, March 2, Centaur Theatre.**

Popular music and jazz

Julia Migenes

Montréal, prepare yourself for the diva in full force! Accompanied solely by pianist Édouard Ferlet, New York soprano **Julia Migenes** will soar through a varied and refreshing repertoire: from Céline Dion to Jacques Brel, from Gershwin to Leonard Cohen, all their songs pass through the prism of her talent, revealing different facets of a singer with a personality as flamboyant as her hair! **Thursday, February 21, Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA. In collaboration with ARTV.**

Chris Botti

Botti will tell you—the music that marks you forever is the music that breaks your heart. With last September's new album, *Italia*, inspired by the romantic land of Dante and calling on opera classics as well as the immortal Morricone, this virtuoso trumpeter will leave his mark on the soul of every music lover who aches for beauty. **Friday, February 22, Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA.**

Jane Birkin, *Rendez-vous*

A wintry Saturday night, a **Rendez-vous** with **Jane Birkin**—it doesn't get any better than this! For one unique evening, she treats us to the many facets of her dizzying talent in a brand new show: Gainsbourg, of course, as well as other songwriters such as Cali, Arthur H, Dominique A and Rufus Wainwright who've written for her, and songwriters—Kate Bush, Tom Waits and even Neil Young – whose work we might previously have considered untouchable. Book your rendez-vous now! **Saturday, February 23, Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA.**

Aline de Lima

She started out writing her songs—her poems set to music—in concealment; but she couldn't hide this light under a bushel for very long! Beautiful, luminous, joyous and blessed with a voice of surpassing warmth, **Aline de Lima** brings a welcome ray of South American sunshine to our February! Her album *Arrebol*, on Naïve, takes deep inspiration from her Brazilian roots, peppering her saudades with charming, danceable little frevos. **Saturday, February 23, Club Soda.**

Bobby McFerrin & Voicestra

A universally recognized jazz pioneer in a cappella, **Bobby McFerrin** slapped a smile on the planet in the '80s with his irresistible Don't Worry, Be Happy. With his **Voicestra** vocal ensemble, he takes the listener on a musical voyage as far as the aural horizon, from jazz to blues-rock with byways through Indian classical opera, with improvisation as their guiding principle. Far beyond mere style exercise, these interactive vocal exploits offer a spellbinding, even quasi-spiritual musical experience. **Tuesday, February 26, Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA. Media parter: MusiMax.**

Claudia Acuña

Chile, Featured Country

Chilean singer, songwriter and arranger **Claudia Acuña** has a sensibility, authenticity, and undeniably human warmth that adorn her voice with elegance. Whether showcasing her effortless mastery of jazz technique or plumbing the Latin rhythms of her roots, she's one of those artists who bring emotion to everything she sings. Hear it and believe it! **Thursday, February 28, Club Soda.**

Hawksley Workman (opening act: Sebastien Grainger)

Toronto, Featured City

An evening with two of the most dynamic artists on the Toronto scene: **Hawksley Workman**, poet, producer, one-man band, even tap-dancer—and Best New Artist at the 2002 Junos. Catch him live to luxuriate in songs from his upcoming album *Between the Beautifuls*—to be released this January 29, 2008—but also to hear music from his vast catalogue of music. Opening the evening, **Sebastien Grainger**, (in)famous for his stunning work in late lamented, powerhouse duo Death From Above 1979. **Friday, February 29, Club Soda.**

Jamaica to Toronto

Toronto, Featured City

It's feel-good party music, from the people who practically invented the genre! *Jamaica to Toronto: Soul Funk & Reggae* is not just a unique and rare trip back through time, but an opportunity to rediscover lost musical treasures, forgotten classics and iconic songs in their lesser-known original versions. Reggae lovers, nostalgists, and plain old lovers of great music won't want miss this must-see event! **Saturday, March 1, Club Soda. In collaboration with CBC Television.**

MIMI 2008 (presented by AMIQ)

The 11th edition of the MIMI (Montreal International Music Initiative) has slimmed down for one prestigious ceremonial feast of awards. The event will feature the best of Montréal's new songwriter performers of the local alternative scene in the context of a festive dinner. The MIMI After Party which features a range on Montréal new live music talents takes place starting at 11:30 p.m. and is open to the public as part of the Nuit blanche à Montréal. **Saturday, March 1, Lion d'Or.**

Classical music

Les Violons du Roy, *L'expérience Bartok*

Les Violons du Roy—29 musicians under the direction of Jean-Marie Zeitouni—present *L'expérience Bartók*, an extraordinary program magisterially blending colour, contrast and the most expressive of musics. Experience major works for chamber orchestra, drawn from the Hungarian pianist-composer's repertoire. Along with the music of Béla Bartók, we'll also experience the contemporary minimalist compositions of Estonia's Arvo Pärt. **Saturday, February 23, Salle Pierre-Mercure.**

L'Ensemble Caprice, *Vivaldi et les gitans*

The music of Vivaldi, composer and violin virtuoso, and the gypsy music of the 18th century. *Uhrovská Zbierka*, a Slovakian collection from 1730 comprising 350 pieces for string ensemble. Two musical expressions with a shared bond of vivacity and melancholy, whose passion and energy burn, whether in a gypsy piece or a Vivaldi flute concerto. **Thursday, February 28, Chapelle Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Chapel.**

Autour de la flûte presents *Le Siècle des Lumières de Paris à Berlin*

A delightful voyage through time and space with baroque/romantic ensemble **Autour de la flûte** and the musical magic woven from its period instruments! With renowned baroque flautist Mika Putterman leading the way on the wooden instrument that was all the rage from the 17th to 19th century in Europe, the group transports us to the heart of the ***Siècle des Lumières de Paris à Berlin***. **Thursday, February 21, Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Chapel.**

The Path to Paradise

A spiritual and musical pilgrimage, drawing not only on some of the masterpieces of Tudor polyphony by Tallis and Palestrina but also on 20th-century pieces by Britten, Barber and Bryar, with the finest professional choir in Quebec—the pure voices of the Choir of the Theatre of Early Music conducted by **Daniel Taylor**. With the Dance Company of Coleman & Lemieux which will perform works from famous choreographers David Earle and James Kudelka. **Monday, February 25, Saint-Léon Church of Westmount.**

Mozart Piano Quartet

Our continent got its first taste of the **Mozart Piano Quartet** less than five years ago, and we've all spent the time since waiting for the German group to make its triumphant return! After seducing Europe, this remarkable quartet comes to Montréal to explore the immortal music of Beethoven, Dvorák and Brahms, with a freshness and spontaneity that sparkle in everything they play. **Monday, February 25, Théâtre Maisonneuve, PDA.**

The Festival loves dance

And this year will be no exception! In addition to the extraordinary performances by our world renowned honorary co-presidents **Margie Gillis** and **Eva Yerbabuena**, we will have the chance to see:

Peggy Baker Dance Projects: *Portal* — world première

Toronto, Featured City

A major name on the international dance scene, Toronto's Peggy Baker has a special gift for Montréal! With music from pianist Andrew Burashko, violinist Olivier Thouin and cellist Yegor Dyachkov, she and her company open the program with *Unfold*, interpreted by Andrea Nann, followed by two world premières: Baker's most recent solo, *Portal*, performed in silence, and a pas de deux with Larry Hahn, *A Woman By A Man*, created by renowned choreographer James Kudelka. Four evenings of uncommon grace. **From Wednesday, February 20 to Saturday, February 23, in the Cinquième Salle, PdA!**

FLAMENCOntemporain

Three remarkable choreographers offer a very contemporary vision of the flamenco. Rae Bowhay's *Llama Da* and Sylvie Marchand's *Rouge Solitude* are joined by a completely new work from Myriam Allard and Hedi El Moro Graja. Traditional sounds and rhythms reformatted for the 21st century... and three new perspectives on a form we thought we knew! **From Thursday, February 21 to Sunday, February 24 and from Thursday, February 28 to Sunday, March 2; Tangente / Agora de la danse.**

The complete program for the gastronomy and wine segment, the **Air France Wine and Dine Experience presented by American Express**, will be unveiled this coming **December 12**. The programs of the **Celebration of Light**, the **Montreal All-Nighter** and the **Montreal Downtown & Underground Event** will be unveiled in **early 2008**. The **9th edition** of the **MONTREAL HIGH LIGHTS Festival** will be held from **Thursday, February 21 to Sunday, March 2, 2008**.

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