

**CHARPENTIER'S TRAGIC PASTORAL OPERA**

Press release  
For immediate release

**La Compagnie Baroque Mont-Royal  
presents**



***Actéon***

An opera by Marc-Antoine Charpentier  
Musical director: Rona Nadler  
Stage director: Jon David  
**2 performances only!**

**Montreal, March, 2014** - La **Compagnie Baroque Mont-Royal** (CBMR) is delighted to present Charpentier's opera ***Actéon*** in the magnificent yet intimate setting of **Victoria Hall in Westmount** on **April 25 and 26**. This production features five soloists, a chamber orchestra, and a chorus under the musical direction of harpsichordist **Rona Nadler** and the stage direction of **Jon David**.

For a long time, Marc-Antoine Charpentier was hidden under the shadows of Lully, but today, he is known as one of the greatest French composers of the 17th century. At the heart of Charpentier's rich output, *Actéon* occupies a unique place. Presented in its day as a "hunting opera," the work unites the pleasures of pastoral life with the gravity of a Greek tragedy.

The plot's mythological nature unfolds in a succession of contrasting scenes. First, as in an old tapestry, we are presented with a hunting scene; Actéon and his companions are hunting for game. After this virile display, the scene shifts to one of charming bliss. The goddess Diana and her nymphs are seen bathing and singing; their lives are peaceful and pleasant, free from the intrusion of unwanted lovers. All of a sudden, Actéon, who has been separated from his gang, is attracted by the voices of these young women, and he can't resist getting a closer look.

He is soon detected by Diana, who punishes him for his voyeurism: he watches with horror as his body is transformed little by little into a stag. He hardly has a moment to mourn his lost humanity. Ignorant of what has just happened, his happy gang returns and they encourage their dogs to devour the animal. The goddess Juno appears and explains Actéon's tragic fate. The work ends with the ensemble lamenting the loss of Actéon.

A rich variety of music - choruses, arias, tragic recitatives and dances – gives life to the myth of Acteon. The hunter becomes the hunted and the unwise voyeur is torn apart by his own dogs, representing basic nature and impulses which has symbolic significance that resonates with the listener. Charpentier paints the nymphs as sirens, whose magic song leads the listener to ruin.

[David Menzies](#), a well known French baroque specialist, creates the role of Acteon. He is joined by an irresistible cast of women united for this occasion: [Chelsea Mahan](#), soprano (Diana), [Kristi Bryson](#), soprano (Aréthuse), [Kripa Nageshwar](#), soprano (Daphné), [Meagan Zantingh](#), mezzo-soprano (Hyale). [Marie-Andrée Mathieu](#), a mezzo-soprano with a rich and dramatic voice, concludes the opera in the role of the vengeful Juno. Rounding out the evening, the orchestra will play gorgeous instrumental music by Marin Marais and François Couperin, contemporaries of Charpentier.

### **La Compagnie Baroque Mont-Royal (CBMR)**

David Menzies and Susan Toman formed La Compagnie Baroque Mont-Royal in 2011, having met at the prestigious Schulich School of Music at McGill University. They share a passion for discovering and performing early opera and instrumental music. With an emphasis on education and the use of historic instruments, CBMR is the only ensemble in Montreal to produce an annual baroque opera, proudly featuring emerging artists to produce engaging presentations for the public.

### **Actéon opera by Marc-Antoine Charpentier**

#### **La Compagnie Baroque Mont-Royal at Victoria Hall**

4626 Sherbrooke Street West, in Westmount

Saturday, April 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 26 at 3:00 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$30 regular, \$25 students/seniors 65+

**Advance ticket prices**, until noon on Friday, April 24: \$25 regular, \$20 student/senior

**Tickets can be purchased at:** <http://bit.ly/1yqr1k9> (credit card, service fee extra), or in person at Victoria Hall, 514-989-5265 (no service fees, cash or cheque only).

**For bios and further information:** [www.cbmroyal.com](http://www.cbmroyal.com)



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