



Festival
Classica

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NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS SYMPHONIQUE

OCM / Simon Leclerc

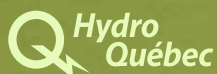
16th edition

12 June 2026 – 7:30 p.m.

Cocathédrale Saint-Antoine-de-Padoue

Longueuil

In collaboration with



Notre-Dame de Paris Symphonique

Program

(115 mins with intermission)

Ouverture

Le temps des cathédrales

Les sans-papiers

Bohémienne

Ces diamants-là

Sorcière / L'enfant trouvé

Tentative d'enlèvement

La cour des miracles

Le mot Phœbus

Beau comme le soleil

Déchiré

Belle

Ave Maria païen

Volupté / Fatalité

Florence

Les cloches

Les oiseaux qu'on met en cage

Être prêtre et aimer une femme

La monture

Un matin tu dansais

Lune

Vivre

Mon maître, mon sauveur

Danse mon Esmeralda

INTERMISSION

Artists

Music: Richard Cocciante

Libretto: Luc Plamondon

Symphonic adaptation and orchestral
arrangements: Simon Leclerc

Orchestre classique de Montréal

Simon Leclerc, conductor

Stage management and artistic coordination:
Isabeau Proulx-Lemire

FLEUR-DE-LYS: Natacha Demers (soprano)

ESMERALDA: Rose Naggar-Tremblay
(mezzo-soprano)

QUASIMODO: Emmanuel Hasler (tenor)

FROLLO: Gino Quilico (baritone)

GRINGOIRE: Pierre Rancourt (baritone)

CLOPIN: Anas Séguin (baritone)

PHŒBUS: Thomas Viñals (tenor)

About

The legendary musical *Notre-Dame de Paris*, created by Luc Plamondon and Riccardo Cocciante, is reborn in a symphonic operatic version in this world premiere. This unprecedented event by the Nouvel Opéra Métropolitain brings together musicians from the Orchestre classique de Montréal and seven outstanding soloists, including Rose Naggar-Tremblay (Esmeralda) and Gino Quilico (Frollo). Twenty-five iconic hits from the most famous French-language musical will resonate beneath the arches of the grand Catedral Saint-Antoine-de-Padoue in Longueuil. From “popular opera” to “opera proper”: a symphonic metamorphosis crafted by Simon Leclerc, a master of the genre and conductor of this unique concert. Presented for the time at Festival Classica, this creation will delight fans of musical theatre, classical music, and bold new artistic experiences.

Program notes

Benjamin Goron, musicologist

*C'est une histoire qui a pour lieu
Paris la belle en l'an de Dieu
Mil quatre cent quatre-vingt-deux
Histoire d'amour et de désir*

*(The setting is Paris the beautiful
In the year of our Lord
Fourteen hundred and ninety-two
A story of love and of desire)*

Bruno Pelletier's voice still resonates in everyone's memory, soaring heavenwards in "Le Temps des cathédrales," the emblematic opening song of the musical *Notre-Dame de Paris*, which debuted in 1998. Now, conductor, composer, and arranger Simon Leclerc gives us a new reading for symphony orchestra and lyric voices, allowing the work of Richard Cocciante and Luc Plamondon to expand, filling a broader architecture of sound. The artistic proposition involves transforming the stage into scenery of quasi-monumental proportions—like the cathedral of Notre-Dame itself, where successive restorations have brought new wonders to light without losing its soul. In this dialogue between memory and reconstruction, Victor Hugo's legendary story remains the work's unshakable foundation: an unfailing source of inspiration whose Romanesque power travels through time with all its strength intact.

Hugo's novel *Notre-Dame de Paris* is a point of convergence for profoundly human themes: beauty rubs shoulders with ugliness, compassion with cruelty, desire with rejection. Quasimodo's impossible love for Esmeralda embodies the eternal tension between appearance and soul, while the character Frollo crystallizes the conflicts between faith, obsession, and moral downfall. Hugo also sets out trenchant reflections on social justice, marginal figures and the crushing weight of institutions. But the characters' tragic destinies chiefly unfold in the majestic framework of the cathedral, itself a fully fledged character in the story. Notre-Dame, with its soaring Gothic arches, its gargoyles frozen in secular silence, and its stained-glass windows shot through with moving light, becomes a living theatre of human passions. Teeming, misty medieval Paris seems to take on a life of its own, in which every stone has a story to tell.

In the musical, the tale is condensed, stylized, and reinvented for the stage. Where Hugo paints a broad canvas with occasional digressions, the musical chooses dramatic effect and emotional intensity. In comparison with the original text, some characters are re-centred: Esmeralda becomes the story's luminous, tragic heart, an innocent crushed by the forces around her. Quasimodo is magnified in his dimension of absolute but silent love, whereas Frollo emerges as an antagonist of fearsome dramatic intensity, torn between desire and repression. Other figures, such as Gringoire, serve more as a guiding thread for the narrative than as drivers of the dramatic tale. The musical also strays away from certain

subtleties of the novel, as well as from lighter, more sugary readings such as those of the Disney version, opting instead for a darker, more tragic and more carnal tone. The plot centres on the fatal meeting between Esmeralda and Quasimodo, Frollo's destructive desire, and the crowd as a blind collective force.

The iconic tunes of *Notre-Dame de Paris* mark out this dramatic fresco, providing emotional anchor points. Right from "Le Temps des cathédrales," sung by Gringoire, we feel the underlying tension between the old world and the coming upheavals: a prophetic overture. "Belle," a hypnotic trio featuring Frollo, Quasimodo, and Phœbus, crystallizes desire in all its forms, from the most carnal to the most forbidden, and remains one of the dramatic high points of the musical. "Danse mon Esmeralda" reveals the heroine's luminous quality and vulnerability, while "Florence" and "Ces diamants-là" depict a broader social and political world of seduction and power. "Ave Maria païen," sung by Esmeralda, condenses the character's spiritual and tragic dimension, caught between prayer and destiny. Lastly, "Vivre" and "Déchiré" symbolically open and close the cycle of human passion, between hope and collapse. In this symphonic version, the force of these musical cameos only increases, as though reverberating along with the stones of a living building.

This musical and scenic architecture resonates with particular intensity today given the dramas that have befallen the cathedral itself. The Notre-Dame fire brought home the cathedral's fragility and its symbolic power, and its progressive reconstruction has brought us to see the monumental building in a new light. Similarly, this musical reinterpretation is an act of transmission and rebirth: a doorway through which to enter a collective imaginary anew—not freezing it, but allowing it to breathe in a new form. In this way, the legend created by Hugo continues to spread further in the space between memory and renewal.

Artists

Natacha Demers
Soprano



Rose Naggartremblay
Mezzo-soprano



Emmanuel Hasler
Tenor



Gino Quilico
Baritone



Pierre Rancourt
Baritone



Anas Séguin
Baritone



Thomas Viñals
Tenor



Orchestre classique de Montréal

Simon Leclerc
Conductor



Isabeau Proulx-Lemire
Stage direction
and artistic
coordination



Orchestre Classique de Montréal

General director: **Taras Kulish**

Manager: **Ana Drobac**

First violins

Marc Djokic, concertmaster

Ana Drobac, assistant concertmaster

Tara-Louise Montour

Isabelle Bouchard

Ewa Sas

Anaïs Saucier-Lafond

Valérie Belzile

Mana Shiraishi

Second violins

Antoine Bareil, principal

Ryan Shao, assistant

Émilie Rabaraona

Nayiri Piloyan

Marc-Olivier Sourdif

Nourit Lacroix

Violas

Annie Parent, principal

Félix Lefebvre, assistant

Marie-Lise Ouellet

Veronica Lee

Avital Lacroix

Cellos

Chloé Dominguez, principal

Marie-Michel Beauparlant, assistant

Thomas Beard

Double basses

Étienne Lafrance, principal

Sebastien Talbot, assistant

Flutes

Albert Brouwer, principal

Benjamin Morency, assistant

Oboes

Kirsten Zander, principal

Élise Poulin, assistant

Clarinets

Martin Carpentier, principal

Brent Besner, assistant

Bassoons

Lise Millets, principal

François Viault, assistant

Horns

Guillaume Roy, principal

Étienne Coulombe, assistant

Lyne Santamaria

Alec Michaud-Cheney

Trumpets

Francis Pigeon, principal

Daniel Howells, assistant

Nicolas Gagnon

Trombones

Sébastien Côté, principal

Nicolas Blanchette, assistant

Jean-Sébastien Vachon, bass trombone

Tuba

Charles-André Labelle-Giroux

Timpani

Catherine Varvaro

Percussion

Catherine Meunier, principal

Catherine Cherrier, assistant

Sébastien Lamontagne

Celesta

Esther Gonthier

Harp

Elena Anger

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16th edition

22 May to June 14 2026

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CONCERTS THAT HIT THE RIGHT NOTE!

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