

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 14, 2015

*"If operas were always the quality of this Julie, our musical life would be considerably richer"*  
– LE MONDE (Paris)

CANADIAN STAGE AND SOUNDSTREAMS PRESENT  
THE NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE OF *JULIE* BY INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED COMPOSER PHILIPPE BOESMANS  
On stage November 17–29 at the Bluma Appel Theatre

Stunning 21<sup>st</sup>-century chamber opera based on August Strindberg's play *Miss Julie* boasts a stellar all-Canadian cast.

Toronto, ON—[Canadian Stage](#) and [Soundstreams](#) are proud to present the North American premiere of internationally-acclaimed and multiple award-winning composer Philippe Boesmans's chamber opera *Julie*, a contemporary English-lyric adaptation of August Strindberg's classic 19<sup>th</sup>-century drama *Miss Julie*. In Canadian Stage's first foray into operatic performance, Artistic and General Director **Matthew Jocelyn** directs a stellar all-Canadian cast (**Lucia Cervoni**, **Clarence Frazer**, **Sharleen Joynt**) under the musical direction of **Leslie Dala**. Presented with the support of the Théâtre d'Orléans (France), *Julie* runs for eight performances from **November 17–29, 2015** at the Bluma Appel Theatre (in English with English supertitles).

*"Belgium's Philippe Boesmans is widely considered to be one of the world's greatest living opera composers. Julie will be the North American première of any opera by this true master of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,"* says Matthew Jocelyn. *"Julie is written for chamber orchestra, an ensemble of 19 soloists who both accompany and provoke the drama. Boesmans navigates the uncertain waters of this domestic tragedy with true virtuosity: 75 uninterrupted minutes of an expertly orchestrated three-person waltz, and its inevitable dead end."*

*"Soundstreams has a long and rich history of producing opera, and we are thrilled to collaborate with Canadian Stage on this extraordinary piece,"* says Lawrence Cherney, Artistic Director of Soundstreams. *"Musically expressionist in the tradition of Alban Berg's Lulu, Boesmans strips away the thin veneer of civilization with a score that elicits the rawest of emotions through brilliant vocal and instrumental writing. We hope that this presentation opens the door long-term to the production of medium-scale Canadian and international operatic works on a scale never before seen in this country."*

Depicting a flirtation that turns into an erotic *danse macabre* between its aristocratic title character and her father's valet, August Strindberg's *Miss Julie* was considered too scandalous to be produced when it was written in 1888—only to become a defining classic of modern drama. A tale of the narrowing realities of life and the human aspiration to break free of those constraints, the Swedish playwright's landmark tragedy of social and sexual transgression has since been performed around the world in a variety of adaptations and formats.

With a libretto by regular Boesmans collaborator **Luc Bondy**, as well as **Marie-Louise Bischofberger**, *Julie* premiered at Brussels' Théâtre de la Monnaie in 2005. Under Matthew Jocelyn's innovative direction, the production launched a European tour in 2009 at France's Théâtre d'Orléans, where it was hailed as *"a living breathing masterpiece [...] fierce and seductive, refined and sombre all at once"* by *Le Soir* (Paris).

*Julie* comes to the Bluma Appel Theatre in its English-language translation sung by the all-Canadian cast of **Lucia Cervoni**, in her professional Canadian debut as Julie, baritone **Clarence Frazer** as Julie's forbidden lover Jean, and acclaimed soprano **Sharleen Joynt** as Jean's scorned fiancée Christine. Conducted by Vancouver-based, nationally acclaimed conductor **Leslie Dala**, this milestone production is Canadian Stage's first opera presentation and inaugural collaboration with Soundstreams. Specializing in contemporary music, Soundstreams' opera presentations have included R. Murray Schafer's Dora Award-winning *The Children's Crusade* (presented with the Luminato Festival) and Brian Current's JUNO Award-winning opera, *Airline Icarus*.

Leading up to and during the run of *Julie*, audiences will have opportunities to engage with director Matthew Jocelyn and other local opera influencers to learn more about the creative and critical process of contemporary opera. Soundstreams hosts "[Salon 21: Understanding Opera](#)," a panel of opera directors and glimpse into a *Julie* technical rehearsal, at the Bluma Appel Theatre on **Thursday, November 12 at 7:30 pm**. Canadian Stage invites the culturally curious to the first installment of its 15.16 [INTERMISSION](#) series on **Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> following the 8:30 pm performance**: a moderated discussion with Matthew Jocelyn about his direction of this production prompting ideas of how to engage with theatre experiences from a critical perspective.

*Julie* will be on stage at the Bluma Appel Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts (27 Front St. E). Performances run Thursdays and Saturdays at 8 pm, with performances Tuesday, Nov 17 at 8 pm, Friday Nov 20 at 7 pm, Sunday Nov 22 at 7 pm, Wednesday Nov 25 at 1 pm and Sunday, Nov 29 at 1 pm. The performance runs 75 minutes with no intermission. Tickets from \$24 to \$99 are available online, by phone at 416.368.3110, or in person at the Berkeley Street box office. For details visit [www.canadianstage.com](http://www.canadianstage.com)

High-resolution photography available [here](#)

**Facebook:** [Canadian Stage](#), [Soundstreams](#)

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**Twitter Hashtag:** #csJulie

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**About Julie**

**Nov. 17 to 29;** Opening and media night: **Nov. 17 at 8 pm**

A Canadian Stage production presented in association with Soundstreams, with support from the Théâtre d'Orléans.

Production Sponsor: BMO

**Cast**

Julie	Lucia Cervoni
Jean	Clarence Frazer
Christine	Sharleen Joynt

**Creative Team**

Composed by	Philippe Boesmans
Libretto by	Luc Bondy and Marie-Louise Bischofberger
Directed by	Matthew Jocelyn
Music Direction	Leslie Dala
Set design	Alain Lagarde
Costume design	Zaia Koscianski
Lighting design	Michael Walton

**About Philippe Boesmans:**

Born in Tongeren, Belgium in 1936, composer Philippe Boesmans is respected as one of most influential musical figures in contemporary music. After being awarded the first prize in piano at the prestigious Conservatoire de Liège, he abandoned piano to pursue composition and developed a highly personal musical language profoundly influenced by the boundary-breaking Serialist music technique and the works of such master composers as Berio, Boulez, Pousseur and Stockhausen. It was only in the 1980s that he began to gain recognition in the opera world with such landmark operatic adaptations as *Wintermärchen* (*A Winter's Tale*, 1999) and *Reigen* (based on Arthur Schnitzler's play *La Ronde*, 1993), hailed as "the greatest opera of the last 75 years" by *Le Monde* newspaper. Boesmans was a composer in residence at Théâtre de la Monnaie from 1986 to 2005, where he completed three operas, the last of which is *Julie*. A multiple award-winner with new opera commissions coming regularly from the Paris National Opera, the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, and the Teatro Real de Madrid, his last opera *Au Monde* was voted Best New Opera in the World by the British Opera Association.

**About Soundstreams:**

Led by Artistic Director Lawrence Cherney and Executive Director Susan Worthington, Soundstreams showcases the work of living Canadian and international composers with a focus on innovative thematic and experiential programming. In collaboration with the finest Canadian and international artists, Soundstreams presents an annual concert series in Toronto as well as national and international tours. Soundstreams also serve the larger community through our free Salon 21 series at The Gardiner Museum, composer training activities, SoundWave program for music lovers under the age of 35, and digital performance space, including concert livestreams, SoundMakers website, and video content. For more information, visit [www.soundstreams.com](http://www.soundstreams.com).

**About Canadian Stage:**

Founded in 1987, Canadian Stage is one of the country's leading not-for-profit contemporary theatre companies, with the 15.16 season marking the organization's 28<sup>th</sup> season. Led by Artistic & General Director Matthew Jocelyn and Managing Director Su Hutchinson, Canadian Stage produces and showcases innovative theatre from Canada and around the world, allowing its audience to

encounter daring work guided by a strong directorial vision and a 21<sup>st</sup>-century aesthetic. The company prides itself on presenting multidisciplinary pieces and work in translation that pushes the boundaries of form and style. Canadian Stage reinforces the presence of Canadian art and artists within an international context through work that mirrors the cultural diversity of Toronto. The company stages an annual season of work at three major venues (the Bluma Appel Theatre, the Berkeley Street Theatre and the High Park Amphitheatre) and runs a series of artist development and education initiatives, as well as youth and community outreach programs. For more information, visit [canadianstage.com](http://canadianstage.com).