

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate distribution



OSQ welcomes its new musical director: Fabien Gabel



Quebec City, December 1, 2011 — **Fabien Gabel**, the new musical director of the Quebec City Symphony Orchestra (Orchestre symphonique de Québec/OSQ), was officially welcomed during a ceremony held today at Quebec City Hall. In attendance were Christine St-Pierre, Quebec's Minister of Culture, of Communications and the Status of Women; Régis Labeaume, Mayor of Quebec City; Olga Farman, OSQ Chair; Sophie Galaise, OSQ General Manager; and Louise Cordeau, OSQ Recruitment Committee Chair.



The ceremony was also attended by OSQ musicians and employees, together with various partners and collaborators, all of whom had come to share in this new chapter in the history of the OSQ, one of Canada's most prestigious orchestras. "We are particularly delighted to welcome Mr. Gabel as a member of the extended OSQ family. In addition to sharing our multi-year development vision, he embodies the winds of change that are sweeping over the OSQ. We firmly believe that Mr. Gabel will help us carry out a range of major innovative projects. He will also help this talented group of musicians obtain the recognition they deserve by enhancing their reputation both at home and abroad," said Olga Farman, OSQ Chair.

After the signing of Quebec City's Golden Book, Mayor Régis Labeaume saluted Mr. Gabel's appointment. "I am pleased to welcome a new champion to Quebec City. Mr. Gabel's success on the international stage is sure to reflect positively on our orchestra and on Quebec City itself. I am sure that the orchestra members and local residents alike will be won over by his charm. Needless to say, many of us will be seeking to share with him our love for Quebec City and music."

Inaugural performance in August 2012

In his inaugural performance as the OSQ's musical director, Mr. Gabel's will be conducting a series of outdoor concerts known as the Estival, a major new symphonic music festival organized by the OSQ and running from August 3 to 12. Details of this brand-new event will be released in February 2012.

Mr. Gabel offered these comments: "A few months ago, I conducted the OSQ for the very first time. I was highly impressed by the quality and virtuosity of the musicians. I was also charmed by Quebec City's vast cultural offerings. I look forward to undertaking a variety of projects with local cultural institutions in the coming years. I call on all Quebecers to show me your city and teach me your history. Let me know what moves you most and what makes you dream! In the future, I will be listening to what Quebec City has to say!"

Choosing a new musical director: a democratic process

The OSQ's musical director was recruited by a committee made up of 10 local residents from a variety of professional backgrounds. Zarin Mehta, executive director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and Frank Dans, who was appointed artistic administrator of the Cleveland Orchestra several years ago, also provided invaluable advice on putting together the list of candidates. All of the individuals on the short list were then evaluated by the OSQ's 66 musicians using the same criteria.

Fabien Gabel emerged as the winner of this painstaking evaluation process. "For nearly three years, the committee reviewed the candidacies of various talented conductors and met with some highly accomplished musicians. Today, we can say: mission accomplished!" said Louise Cordeau, chair of the Recruitment Committee. "In our view, Mr. Gabel's excellent musical direction skills, his ability to develop the OSQ and his commitment to work together with the extended community meant that he was the best qualified candidate", she added. Darren Lowe, OSQ concertmaster and member of the Recruitment Committee, also paid tribute to Mr. Gabel's undeniable talent. "Mr. Gabel showed us that he has a complete mastery of his art. He cares about excellence. We are convinced that he will bring out the best in our musicians and will lead them to new heights on concert stages at home and around the world. We are proud and privileged to be working with him."

Marie-Claude Perron, president of the OSQ Musicians Association (AMMOSQ), offered these comments: "The OSQ Musicians Association extends an enthusiastic welcome to Fabien Gabel as the OSQ's new musical director. We are eager to perform with him again and we know that he will share our energy and inspiration, as well as our desire to offer local residents a series of memorable concerts."

About Fabien Gabel

Born in Paris in 1975, Fabien Gabel is a trumpeter. He has performed with numerous orchestras under the leadership of renowned conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Sir Colin Davis, Riccardo Muti, Seiji Ozawa, Simon Rattle and Bernard Haitink. Mr. Gabel studied orchestral direction alongside David Zinman and Armin Jordan and has worked closely with Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink and Paavo Järvi.

In 2004, Mr. Gabel won the prestigious Donatella Flick Conducting Competition in London, enabling him to conduct the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) at the Barbican Centre. He was subsequently appointed the LSO's assistant conductor. Since then, he has been regularly invited to conduct the LSO at the Barbican Centre. He also maintains privileged relations with the Orchestre National de France, with which he served as assistant to Kurt Masur. His latest recording of French operatic arias with Canadian contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux in July 2010 won the Charles Cros Academy's International Grand Prize for CDs and DVDs.

Mr. Gabel regularly conducts orchestras in France (Lyons, Toulouse, Bordeaux-Aquitaine, Strasbourg), including subscription concerts at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. He has also conducted in Rotterdam, London, Paris, Hamburg, Liège, Barcelona, Lausanne, St. Petersburg, among other cities. In the 2011-2012 season, he made a well-received debut at the Staatskapelle Dresden, in addition to conducting the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra on tour. In the fall of 2011, he conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the famous opera Carmen at the Massy Opera. He has been invited to perform again with Radio-France's Philharmonic Orchestra and the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra in the next few months. He will also be making his conducting debuts with the Oslo and Brussels Philharmonic Orchestras.

About the Orchestre symphonique de Québec (OSQ)

As the uncontested leader of the cultural scene in Quebec City and across Canada, the OSQ makes a major contribution to economic development in the Quebec City metropolitan region. Serving as a veritable cultural powerhouse, the OSQ employs approximately 300 people per year on average and administers a budget of more than \$7.5 million funded by operating revenues, fundraising activities and government grants.

- 30 -



Season partner

Source: Sophie Galaise
General Manager, OSQ

Information: Hélène Barbeau
Assistant Director of Communications
Office: (418) 643-7529
Cell: (418) 254-8849
hbarbeau@osq.qc.ca