

Toronto **Symphony** Orchestra

Peter Oundjian, Music Director

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Media Release

TWO OF THE MOST FASHIONABLE & INTERVIEWABLE SOLOISTS APPEAR WITH THE TSO!

Yannick Nézet-Séguin, conductor / Shauna Rolston, cello
November 29 & 30 at 8 pm / Roy Thomson Hall

Toronto, Ontario-- The Russian Festival continues as one of Canada's most gifted young conductors, **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**, steps onto the podium in a concert featuring **Mussorgsky's *Khovantchina* Introduction; Scriabin's Symphony No. 3, "The Divine Poem"**, and **Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rococo Theme***, with Canada's most glamorous cellist, **Shauna Rolston**.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin, 32, exudes charm, all-round charisma and cuts a compact, dashing, Prada-clad figure. Artistic Director of the Orchestre Métropolitain in Montreal since 2000, and starting his fifth season as Principal Guest Conductor of the Victoria Symphony, Yannick has already conducted extensively in Canada, and continues a blazing trail of American debuts. His European debut a year ago was a success, and he has secured invitations back to many cities across Europe. "I knew I wanted to be conductor when I was ten," states Yannick, who declares he owes his career to both perseverance and happenstance. His career began to move in 1998 when l'Opéra de Montréal's General and Artistic Director Bernard Uzan called to offer him the post of Chorus Master and Assistant Music Director. Having just discovered his own interest in opera the year before, Yannick eagerly accepted. He studied everything at the Conservatoire de Montréal – piano, chamber music, conducting, and counts Charles Dutoit, and Carlo Maria Giulini, who coached him, as major influences. Many conductors establish themselves in their chosen instrument before moving to conducting; Yannick is the rare breed of conductor who knew from the get-go conducting was "it", although he is a gifted pianist, and has recorded with soprano Suzie LeBlanc on the ATMA label. He is also a huge fan of Callas, Tebaldi, Fischer-Dieskau, Toscanini (with some mixed feelings), Bruckner, Brahms, and Bach. He firmly believes in approaching the podium respectful of the musicians' talent and knowledge. Along with his TSO gig, Yannick will return to Toronto make his Canadian Opera Company debut in February. He is comfortable giving interviews in both English and French.

Shauna Rolston looks like a fashion model, dresses like a Queen Street West sophisticate, and has a most infectious giggle. Onstage, she is impressive, fearless, and provocative – her work powerful, intimate, and pure. Offstage, she throws fantastic parties, has shoe-shaped furniture upholstered in leopard print, and keeps the drinks chilled for parties on her large patio during the cold weather. She spent her formative years in Banff, where her parents were founders and Co-Directors of the Music and Sound Program of the Banff Centre of Fine Arts. She grew up playing for many of the world's great cellists, and avoided the whole "prodigy" thing thanks to her sensible parents. Shauna earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History from Yale and a Master of Music from Yale School of Music. She travels world-wide on tour, appearing either in recitals or with orchestras. A masterful innovator, Shauna is an enthusiastic advocate and performer of the music of our time. She has given the world premieres of an astounding number of works written for her. Her music videos are broadcast on Bravo! Television, appearing either solo, or with eleven other cellists, conductor Keri-Lynn Wilson, or prima ballerina Evelyn Hart. Shauna is currently a Professor of Cello and Co-Head of the String Department at the University of Toronto. She is a visiting Artist for the Music and Sound Programs at the Banff Centre.

Part of the Russian Festival.

On November 30 at 7 pm in the auditorium, Rick Phillips will discuss the evening's programme. Free to patrons.
Tickets: Call the Roy Thomson Hall box office at 416 593 4828. \$117, \$88, \$80.50, \$70, \$61, \$44.50, \$35.50, \$30.
Mon-Fri, 9-8. Sat, 12-5. Sun, 3 hrs prior to concert start. Purchase online: www.tso.ca VISA/MC/AMEX.

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