



## NEWS RELEASE

**The Glenn Gould Foundation and The Canadian Opera Company Orchestra**  
celebrate the Twelfth Glenn Gould Prize Laureate

### ***Jessye Norman***

February 20<sup>th</sup> at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts

**November 13, 2018 – TORONTO** – Iconic American singer, opera star and activist **Jessye Norman** will be awarded the Twelfth Glenn Gould Prize at a celebratory award ceremony and concert in her honour on **Wednesday, February 20, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.**, presented by The Glenn Gould Foundation and the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.

***The Glenn Gould Prize Celebrates Jessye Norman*** features the COC Orchestra led by COC Music Director **Johannes Debus** and the Toronto debuts of esteemed Swedish dramatic soprano **Nina Stemme**, South African lyric soprano **Pumeza Matshikiza**, tenor **Rodrick Dixon**, and bass-baritone **Ryan Speedo Green**. The evening includes performances by celebrated Canadian-American soprano **Sondra Radvanovsky**, Canadian mezzo-soprano **Wallis Giunta**, and **The Nathaniel Dett Chorale** directed by **Brainerd Blyden-Taylor**, with conductors **Bernard Labadie**, Music Director of New York's Orchestra of St. Luke's and **Donald Runnicles**, General Music Director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin. **Viggo Mortensen**, Chair of The Glenn Gould Prize Jury, will be among the presenters at the event. Ms. Norman will be present to receive her award at this ceremony.

Jessye Norman made her operatic debut in 1969 at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and has since won acclaim for her performances in a wide range of leading roles with the world's premier opera companies, in solo recitals and in concerts with preeminent orchestras around the globe. Her exceptional artistry has earned her the reputation as one of the most versatile concert and operatic singers of her time. She has more than seventy-five recordings of her eclectic repertoire to her credit. She is well known for her mastery of the music of Richard Strauss and Wagner, two of Glenn Gould's favourite composers. Given the exceptional range of her voice, she has sung soprano, mezzo-soprano and alto repertoire throughout her career. Ms. Norman is the recipient of many international awards and honours including The Kennedy Center Honor, five Grammy awards including the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award for Classical Music, more than 30 honorary doctorates, the NAACP's Springarn Award and The National Medal of Art, presented to her by President Barack Obama.

A true global citizen, Jessye Norman has sung at two Presidential Inaugurations, President Jimmy Carter's Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony, Queen Elizabeth's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday concert, the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday concert to free Nelson Mandela (seen by 600 million viewers), the first commemorative concert at Ground Zero following the 9/11 attacks, and was chosen by France to sing La Marseillaise for the bicentennial of the French Revolution.

Known as a devoted mentor and generous supporter of young artists and emerging talent, Ms. Norman is also admired for her humanitarian contributions and her passionate advocacy of arts education which includes helping to establish The Jessye Norman School of the Arts in her hometown of Augusta, Georgia.

As part of The Glenn Gould Prize, each Laureate receives \$100,000 (CAD) and selects an outstanding young artist who shows the promise of an exceptional lifetime contribution to enriching the human condition through the arts, such as that exhibited by the young Glenn Gould. After accepting her prize, Ms Norman will present The Glenn Gould Protégé Prize of \$15,000 (CAD) to an outstanding young artist of her choice.

Tickets to **The Glenn Gould Prize Celebrates Jessye Norman** gala concert go on sale November 20 at 10 a.m. through the Four Seasons Centre Box Office and are available by calling 416-363-8231 or online at [coc.ca](http://coc.ca). Tickets start at \$45.

A Gala Reception will be held at the Four Seasons Centre, following the concert. Tickets to the Gala Reception and Concert may also be purchased through the Four Seasons Centre Box Office. Proceeds help to continue and advance the work of The Glenn Gould Foundation.

The Twelfth Glenn Gould Prize Celebrations begin February 12, 2019 in Toronto and will contribute to Black History Month with a series of events honouring Jessye Norman including a day-long exploration of the contributions of artists of African heritage to the opera over the last 200 years co-presented with the Toronto Reference Library, an opera film series presented in partnership with TIFF, arts workshops, and masterclasses at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, as part of their Stratton Visitorship. Full details will be announced in 2019.

#### **ABOUT THE GLENN GOULD FOUNDATION**

The Glenn Gould Foundation honours Glenn Gould's spirit and legacy by celebrating brilliance, promoting creativity and transforming lives through the power of music and the arts with the Foundation's signature activities, including The Glenn Gould Prize. An international symbol of creative excellence, The Glenn Gould Prize is awarded biennially to a living individual for a unique lifetime contribution that has enriched the human condition through the arts. Prize laureates include Jessye Norman (2018), Philip Glass (2015), Robert LePage (2013), Leonard Cohen (2011), Dr. José Antonio Abreu (2008) founder of El Sistema, Pierre Boulez (2002), Yo-Yo Ma (1999), Oscar Peterson (1993) and Lord Yehudi Menuhin (1990). For more information visit [www.glenn Gould.ca](http://www.glenn Gould.ca), follow us on Facebook: TheGlennGouldFoundation or Twitter: @GlennGouldFndn.

#### **ABOUT THE CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY ORCHESTRA**

The COC Orchestra—the oldest opera orchestra in Canada—comprises more than 50 permanent instrumentalists and has received worldwide acclaim for its musical versatility and range of expression. Under conductor Johannes Debus, who was appointed Music Director of the Canadian Opera Company in 2009, the orchestra continues to excel in a wide variety of repertoire, achieving “almost otherworldly perfection” (*Globe and Mail*).

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