

This January 27th 2019, the St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Montreal on St. Joseph Blvd West, will be celebrating the traditional Tatianin day (January 25th) with an unusual and exquisite concert in its parish hall, featuring arias, duets and dances from Piotr Ilyitch Tchaikovsky's opera «*Evgeniy Onegin*».

The talented young performers are all voice or dance professionals, graduates of McGill U, U de Montreal and U de Sherbrooke Master's programmes in Opera and Voice, or of dance academies in Quebec.

Mezzo soprano Anna Maria Popescu, assistant Professor of Voice and Italian diction at McGill, will be preparing and bringing six of her students who are all very eager to be singing in Russian for a Russian audience.

Annamaria Popescu has a long personal connection with St. Nicholas Cathedral. She has sung there annually as soloist on Feast days since 1978 with Choir Director George Sayig; was soloist for the 1988 Millenium of Christianisation of Rus at McGill and for the memorial concert for G. Sayig in 2013. Her father, V. Rev. Peter Popescu, was rector of the Romanian Annunciation Church in Montreal from 1952 to 2000.

The program will feature the famous and beloved arias of Tatiana, Gremin, Onegin and Lensky. Annamaria Popescu, a singer of international renown and frequent soloist at La Scala in Milan, will herself be singing Olga's aria and Olga and Tatiana's duet with her student, Soprano Ksenia Kochieva. In addition, two duets from Tchaikovsky's Opus 46 - Viecher and Minula Strast will be performed by other Soprano students.

The singers will be accompanied by the virtuosic Peletsis-Dardykina Piano Duet. Anna Peletsis and Tatiana Dardykina, both holding doctorates in piano, are teachers at McGill U. They will also play as soloists:

- Sergei Rachmaninov's Musical Moment in E minor Op. 16 N4 and
- Prokofiev's Prelude in Do opus 12 N7
- Prokofiev's **Maslenitsa** duet from Stravinsky's *Petroushka*.

This Tatianin Day concert promises to be an afternoon of magic musical moments.

To recreate the atmosphere of Tatianin balls of long ago, Arpad Xavier Bocz and Sarah Lafond (pictured above), principal dancers of the Montreal «*Bokréta*» Ensemble, will open both halves of the concert with the majestic **Waltz and Polonaise** from the *Onegin* Opera, in period costumes.

In addition, they will dance dynamic, folkloric versions of the **Mazurka and Czardas** in traditional Polish and Hungarian costumes, both dances very popular at balls in the 19th c.

The concert should last 1hour 45 min with the entr'acte.

This event, part of new concert series at the cathedral, has been made possible by the 2018 donation of a concert Kawai Grand piano by longtime parishioners Andre and Maria Bandrauk. The latter has organized numerous classical and sacred music concert tours in Quebec to benefit the Rebuilding Fund of the cathedral: Valaam singers from St Petersburg in 2003; Yale Russian Chorus in 2009 and Rachmaninov's Vespers in 2002.

At the entr'acte, the public will have an opportunity to buy and savour St. Nicholas cathedral's sisterhood's celebrated freshly made pirozhki and traditional pastries and tea, of course.

The proceeds of this benefit concert will go towards the cathedral's Rebuilding Fund. St. Nicholas Cathedral is still undergoing repairs from the devastating fire of 1998 Ice Storm and is raising funds towards a proper iconostasis.

Pre-sale tickets for \$25 are available by reservation at: maria.ignatow@hec.ca or at the Cathedral Shop on Sundays (11 am to 12.30 pm). On the day of the concert, tickets will be \$30 at the entrance of the parish hall.