

News Release
Oct 28, 2025

For immediate release:

Gala Noël: A Holiday Celebration Honouring 40 Years of the Musical Instrument Bank

OTTAWA, ON – Inspired by PBS’s *A Carnegie Hall Christmas Concert* (1991) – **but with a distinct Chamberfest twist!** – **Gala Noël** promises a joyful, elegant, and heartwarming celebration that captures the magic of the holidays through music. This multifaceted evening will bring together the very best of Canada’s classical, operatic, and jazz talent for a spectacular start to the festive season.

Taking place Saturday, November 22 at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre, **Gala Noël** shines a spotlight on the **40th Anniversary of the Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank**. This national treasure has supported generations of Canada’s most accomplished string players with exceptional instruments crafted by world renowned luthiers, including Stradivarius, Gagliano and Pressenda.

In tribute to this milestone, the concert features a dazzling lineup of current Instrument Bank laureates and celebrated alumni, alongside some of Canada’s most exciting guest artists, performing festive favourites that radiate warmth, nostalgia, and joy.

“Growing up, I was inspired by classic holiday concerts that brought people together through extraordinary performances,” says Carissa Klopoushak, Chamberfest Artistic Director. “With **Gala Noël**, I aimed to curate a special – and epic – evening that celebrates the very best that Canada has to offer. From the remarkable instruments and artists of the Musical Instrument Bank to some of our finest voices in opera and jazz, there’s a little something for everyone – and a whole lot of feel-good!”

Featured Instrument Bank Laureates:

Greg Lewis, Julia Mirzoev, Astrid Nakamura, Kumiko Sakamoto, Yu Kai Sun, and Chris Whitley (violins);

Leana Rutt and Andrea Stewart (cellos).

Joined by **Stephanie Morin** (flute), **Susan Butler** (oboe), **Shauna Barker** (clarinet), **Darren Hicks** (bassoon), **Louis-Pierre Bergeron** (horn), **Carissa Klopoushak** (viola), **David Marks** (viola), and **Thibault Bertin-Maghit** (double bass) to round out the ensemble on stage.

Featured Guest Artists:

Opera: the soaring voices of **Meghan Lindsay** (soprano) and **Alex Hetherington** (mezzo-soprano)

Jazz: a dynamic trio of **Steve Boudreau** (piano), **John Geggie** (bass), and **Jim Doxas** (drum set)

Choral: the radiant **Caelis Academy Ensemble**, led by **Matthew Larkin**.

The program will weave together beloved holiday classics – from Handel’s *Messiah* and Mozart’s *Alleluia* to *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and timeless carols – along with music by Bach, Grieg, and your favourite nostalgic Christmas tunes.



Presented as part of the Marina Kun Concert Series, **Gala Noël** is a celebration of Canadian artistry and shared heritage – a gathering that bridges classical elegance with the spirit of community. From beloved carols to timeless jazz, this concert promises an evening of inspiration and celebration for audiences of all ages.

Laureate and artist interviews are available upon request.

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Event Details:

Gala Noël: Holiday Kickoff

Saturday, November 22, 2025 | 19:00

Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre (355 Cooper St, Ottawa)

Presented as part of the 2025–26 Marina Kun Concert Series

Event page:

www.chamberfest.com/event/2025/gala-noel-holiday-kickoff/

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