



Press release
For immediate release

ROAD TRIP! A PAN-CANADIAN PARTNERSHIP VIOLINIST AMY HILLIS AND PIANIST MEAGAN MILATZ SELECTED TO TOUR IN 2019-2020

Montréal, June 5, 2018 – Violinist Amy Hillis and pianist Meagan Milatz – also known as *meagan&amy* – have been selected for a pan-Canadian tour offered by Debut Atlantic, Jeunesses Musicales Canada and Prairie Debut in 2019-2020.

The three classical music organizations announced in September 2017 that they were teaming up to offer an emerging artist or ensemble a tour that would span the country. **Road Trip! A Pan-Canadian Partnership** also celebrates two important anniversaries: Jeunesses Musicales Canada's 70th, and Debut Atlantic's 40th.

"We received over 50 applications, all worthy candidates, but *meagan&amy*'s proposal stood out. Their collaborative musicianship combined with their very accessible, yet audacious repertoire made an immediate impression upon the jury", says Danièle LeBlanc, Executive and Artistic Director of Jeunesses Musicales Canada. *meagan&amy*'s concert will explore the idea of a musical identity able to bridge all provinces and territories, presenting works by local composers as well as European classical works, as a way of considering their influence on Canadian music.

"*meagan&amy*'s concert proposal is all the more interesting as they hail from the Prairies, have studied in Montreal, and have performed across the country, bringing a broad perspective to their programming that strives to reflect the similarities and differences of Canada's diverse regions," says Mhiran Faraday, Executive Director of Debut Atlantic.

Road Trip! A Pan-Canadian Partnership, will run between September 2019 and May 2020, and will offer close to forty performances, taking place across 10 provinces and territories. "We are thrilled to offer this unique opportunity to *meagan&amy*, especially since emerging artists very rarely get to play tours of this scope", adds Po Yeh, Executive Director of Prairie Debut.

Amy Hillis has "a rich, warm sound and has mastered the violin with such ease, that it is impossible to ignore her passion in performance" (Ludwig Van Montréal). Originally from Regina, Saskatchewan, Amy collaborates with musicians from around the world in order to explore new approaches to classical and contemporary music. Amy was a 2017 artist-in-residence at La Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, a residency awarded by the Conseils des Arts et des Lettres du Québec. She is also the winner of the 2018 Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition, the 2017 McGill Concerto Competition, the Sylva Gelber Foundation Music Award, and a doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Her principal teachers have been Axel Strauss, Ian Swensen, Denise Lupien and Eduard Minevich. Amy is a member of the Montreal-based SOMA Quartet as well as first violinist and manager of the prairie-based Horizon String Quartet. She performs on the 1820 Joannes Franciscus Pressenda, on loan from the Canada Council for the Arts Musical Instrument Bank.

A seasoned performer, **Meagan Milatz** has appeared as soloist with several Canadian orchestras including the Sherbrooke Symphony Orchestra, the McGill Symphony Orchestra, and most recently the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. Top prizewinner at the 2014 Shean Piano Competition and the 2011 CFMTA National Piano Competition, her performance endeavours have brought her to international stages, including Hilton Head Island, South Carolina; Bruges, Belgium; Gijón, Spain; and Gdańsk, Poland. Equally passionate as a collaborative pianist, Milatz is currently based in Montreal where she collaborates frequently with Andrew Wan, concertmaster of the

OSM. She received her Master's degree from McGill University where she studied modern piano with Ilya Poletaev and fortepiano with Tom Beghin. In 2017, Milatz was a participant in the famed Kneisel Hall Young Artist Program, and is currently studying collaborative piano with Philip Chiu. She is a 2017 Sylva Gelber Music Foundation Award recipient.

meagan&amy share an intense passion for innovative programming and fearless music-making. Praised for their energy, sensitivity and musical maturity, they began their partnership in 2011 at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University, even though both hail from Saskatchewan. Their individual strengths – Milatz's interest in the fortepiano and Hillis's aptitudes for contemporary music – have combined to inform the wide range of repertoire which they present.

ABOUT DEBUT ATLANTIC

Bringing Canada's exceptional classical music artists to Atlantic Canadian communities since 1979, Debut Atlantic takes the guess work out of presenting excellence in the genre by curating a five tour season of primarily emerging artists, available to presenters throughout the Atlantic region. Additionally, Debut Atlantic is deeply committed to educational and community engagement activities as well as offering an annual scholarship to an exceptional Atlantic Canadian high school music student.

ABOUT JEUNESSES MUSICALES CANADA

Jeunesses Musicales Canada (JMC) is a talent incubator that boosts the careers of the best emerging artists, while helping to democratize classical music for audiences of all ages. Today, JMC seasons include over 1 200 musical activities presented across Canada, ranging from high-calibre concerts to exciting musical activities for young audiences.

ABOUT PRAIRIE DEBUT

Since 1997, Prairie Debut has been working collaboratively with provincial touring networks and presenters to bring Canadian world-music and classical musicians of the highest levels of artistic excellence, to communities of all sizes. Through the creation of touring opportunities, Prairie Debut provides valuable career development for emerging Canadian artists, and plays a significant role in community enrichment and audience development throughout the region. Prairie Debut plans and develops tours of between 30 to 40 concerts per year, with outreach school and community programming that reach thousands.

debutatlantic.ca

jmcanada.ca

prairiedebut.com

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For information :

Marie-Philippe M. Lambert
Communications Coordinator
Jeunesses Musicales Canada
mplambert@jmcanada.ca
514-845-4108 ext. 222

Mhiran Faraday
Executive Director
Debut Atlantic
mdfaraday@debutatlantic.ca
902-429-6812

Po Yeh
Executive Director
Prairie Debut
pyeh@prairiedebut.com
403-862-2954