



Handel *Hercules*
Celebrating Jeanne Lamon's 30th anniversary as Music Director

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and Chamber Choir
Directed by Jeanne Lamon

Stage direction by Marshall Pynkoski
Choreographed by Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg
Lighting Design by Raha Javanfar

Allyson McHardy, *Dejanira*
Nathalie Paulin, *Iole*
Mireille Lebel, *Lichas*
Colin Balzer, *Hyllus*
Sumner Thompson, *Hercules*
David Roth, *Priest of Jupiter*

Date + Times:	<u>Koerner Hall, The Royal Conservatory of Music TELUS Centre</u> Thurs Jan 19 – Sat Jan 21 at 8 PM Sunday Jan 22 at 3:30 PM
Ticket Prices:	Regular: \$45 - \$99 65+: \$35 - \$89 Face the Musik: for 30 & under: \$25 - \$89
Venue:	The Royal Conservatory of Music TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor Street West
Box Office:	The Royal Conservatory of Music TELUS Centre: 416.408.0208 / www.tafelmusik.org
Website:	www.tafelmusik.org / www.facebook.com/tafelmusik.org

To celebrate **Jeanne Lamon's** 30th anniversary as Music Director, Tafelmusik presents a special concert staging of Handel's dramatic and rarely performed *Hercules* at Koerner Hall from January 19 to 22. This "Musical Drama in Three Acts" features a stellar cast and dancers from Atelier Ballet.

Jeanne Lamon directs the orchestra, chamber choir and guest soloists **Nathalie Paulin**, soprano; **Allyson McHardy**, mezzo-soprano; **Mireille Lebel**, mezzo-soprano; **Colin Balzer**, tenor; and **Sumner Thompson**, baritone. Stage direction and choreography for *Hercules* are by Co-Artistic Directors of Opera Atelier, **Marshall Pynkoski** and **Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg** respectively.

Handel's *Hercules* was inspired by Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and a tragedy written by Sophocles more than 2,500 years ago. Tafelmusik's presentation will allow the focus to remain on Handel's music as the primary source of characterization, while incorporating some theatrical and operatic elements. The score for *Hercules* features one of Handel's most passionate female roles in Dejanira, Hercules' wife and murderer, sung by Allyson McHardy.

Allyson McHardy's voice has been described as radiant, dusky, incandescent, and sumptuous. She recently garnered rave reviews for her remarkable vocal ability and commanding stage presence in her debut as Arcabonne in JC Bach's rarely staged opera *Amadis de Gaule* at the Château de Versailles: "Allyson McHardy ... perfectly incarnates the role of the enchantress drunk with anger and demanding vengeance. The warmth of her timbre is magnificent. It vibrates and we want more." (*La Tribune*, Paris). Ms. McHardy returns to Toronto later this season to appear in the Canadian Opera Company's production of *Semele* by Handel.

Over the past 30 years, violinist and music director Jeanne Lamon has guided Tafelmusik from its humble beginnings in a church basement to becoming known as "one of the world's top baroque orchestras" (*Gramophone Magazine*). She chose *Hercules* to celebrate her 30th anniversary, remarking, "I especially love the secular Handel pieces like *Hercules* that are so able to capture the human condition, in all of its frailties. Handel can do that better than just about anybody. It's the first time I've performed the piece – and what better way to celebrate an anniversary than by unwrapping something new!"

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Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, led by Music Director Jeanne Lamon and founded in 1979, is one of the world's leading period performance ensembles. This season, Music Director Jeanne Lamon celebrates 30 years of inspired leadership of Tafelmusik. The orchestra performs over 50 concerts a year at home in Toronto, tours extensively around the world, has released over 78 CDs and has received nine JUNO Awards and a Grammy Award nomination. Tafelmusik is the Baroque Orchestra-in-Residence at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto and operates its annual Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute. The Tafelmusik Chamber Choir, specializing in baroque performance practice and vocal technique, was formed in 1981 to complement the Orchestra and celebrates its 30th anniversary this season. Tafelmusik looks forward to a full roster of touring activities this season including its 19th year as Orchestra-in-Residence in Irsee, Germany, a US tour with a return engagement at Carnegie Hall, the orchestra's Australian debut, and performances in Versailles, France, with Opera Atelier. Canadian excursions include a residency at the Banff Centre, concerts in Ontario and performances by the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir with l'Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal at the inaugural concerts in its new hall.

For media information or to arrange an interview, please contact:
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High-resolution photos of Jeanne Lamon, Tafelmusik and guest artists are available for download from our [Media Room](#).