

ESO caps season with free concert to fete Quebec City; Conductor closely connected to 400-year-old city

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EDMONTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FREE CONCERT CELEBRATING QUEBEC CITY'S 400TH ANNIVERSARY

With: Claude Lapalme (conducting), Chorale Saint-Jean, Martin Riseley (violin) and others

When: Sunday at 2 p.m.

Where: Winspear Centre

Tickets: First-come, first-served seating starting at 1 p.m.

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EDMONTON - If it weren't for Quebec City, conductor Claude Lapalme wouldn't be Lapalme.

The Red Deer Symphony Orchestra music director's ancestors settled in la vieille capitale in the 17th century, around the time the 400-year-old city was founded, and one of Lapalme's forefathers, a stonecutter and architect, even helped build an original Quebec City gate. That relative, Pierre Janson, was nicknamed "Lapalme," perhaps because he used the palm of his hand to measure stones.

The personal Québécois connection makes conducting the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra's Sunday afternoon tribute concert to Quebec's City's big 4-0-0 all the more special for Lapalme. Still, he says the history is of relevance to all Canadians.

"1608 is the day a city was truly founded in Canada," Lapalme says. "It's the beginning of urban Canada."

The free 70-minute show, which marks the official end of the ESO season, is a celebration of French-Canadian culture and history. It features the U of A's Chorale Saint-Jean, led by Laurier Fagnan, concertmaster Martin Riseley on violin, and Senator Claudette Tardif and CBC Radio-Canada's Yves-Gerard Mehou-Loko as hosts.

The diverse music program includes Robert Farnon's *A la claire fontaine* and Francois Dompierre's *Les Diableries*.

"*Les Diableries* is a story about the devil, which abounds in French-Canadian culture," Lapalme says. "The devil takes many guises: a jiggling one, a limping one, a happy one. It's about the moods of the devil."

The program also features a flavour of Alberta, with the maestro's own arrangement of Ian Tyson classic *Four Strong Winds*.

"I'm very proud to be a Quebecer, and to do this show," Lapalme says. "But am I Albertan? Yes. With a funny accent."

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